

ROGERSON'S
VOICE
FROM THE
TOWN



5

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

10

A

VOICE FROM THE TOWN,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

JOHN BOLTON ROGERSON,

AUTHOR OF "RHYME, ROMANCE, AND REVERY," ETC.

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

WORRINGTON.

LONDON :
THOMAS MILLER, NEWGATE STREET.

MANCHESTER :

BRADSHAW & BLACKLOCK, BROWN STREET.

MDCCLXII.

MANCHESTER :

Bradshaw & Blacklock, Printers, 27, Brown Street.

PR
525.5
1813 v

TO

S A M U E L B A M F O R D,

A U T H O R O F

"HOURS IN THE BOWERS," AND "PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF A RADICAL,"

This Volume

IS .

A F F E C T I O N A T E L Y D E D I C A T E D

B Y H I S F R I E N D ,

J O H N B O L T O N R O G E R S O N .

775464

P R E F A C E .

IT is said by D'Israeli, that “a Preface, being the entrance to a book, should invite by its beauty.” This may be true, but it is considerably more easy to lay down a rule than to follow the precept; and if the public decline to enter into this book, unless they pass through an inviting Preface, the contents will have a fair prospect of being unread.

With regard to the principal poem, I am afraid that it may be thought too fragmentary. Plot there is none; nor have I studied to bind the subjects together by a continuous chain. I have commented upon what has impressed itself on my mind at various periods, during my residence in a large town; and have left untouched many subjects perhaps more deserving of notice than those which I have chosen for my themes. One of my objects has been to embody some of the feelings of my own heart, and to give vent to my emotions freely and undisguisedly. It may be objected, that an author ought to make confidants of his friends, and not trouble the public with his sorrows. To this I should be unwilling to subscribe. I agree with Coleridge, when he says—“If I could judge of others by myself, I should not hesitate to affirm, that the most interesting passages in our most

interesting poems, are those in which the author develops his own feelings. The sweet voice of Cona* never sounds so sweetly, as when it speaks of itself; and I should almost suspect that man of an unkindly heart, who could read the opening of the third book of *Paradise Lost* without peculiar emotion. By a law of nature, he who labours under a strong feeling is impelled to seek for sympathy ; but a Poet's feelings are all strong.—*Quicquid amet valde amat.*”

The principal poem was written hastily. I mention this as a fact, and not as an excuse. The minor poems are trifling and unambitious, and may probably escape the censure of the critic from their insignificance. I am conscious that there are many faults in the book ; and I have no doubt less interested parties will discover others, that have escaped my observation,—but “what is writ is writ.”

Should this production not be unfavourably received, I may be induced, at a future time, to attempt a work more worthy the acceptance of the public.

I take this opportunity of expressing my obligations to my Printers, for the care and attention which they have bestowed on the work in its progress through the Press, and for the tasteful style in which the volume has been executed.

To those friends who have cheered me, not with lip-service only, I tender my brief, but not the less warm and sincere thanks.

Hulme, Manchester,

May, 1842.

* Ossian.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A VOICE FROM THE TOWN. Part I.	9
————— Part II.	33
————— Part III.	57

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

The Poet's Home	31
An Address	37
The Princess and the Poet	39
Sleepless Fancies	93
The Troubadour	94
The Festival of Charity	100
The Lover's Lay	103
A Father's Prayer	105
The Maiden's Grave	107
England and Cambria	113
Sonnet to T. A. Tidmarsh, Esq.	117
Song	118
The Broken Spell	120
The Minstrel's Lot	122
Love Rhymes	126
May	128
To John Critchley Prince	132
Zaidee	135
The Meeting and Parting	137

	PAGE
The Offering	140
Sonnet, on being presented with Shelley's Works	142
Youth's Return	143
A Friendly Tribute, addressed to Robert Rose, Esq., (The Bard of Colour)	146
The Songs of England	149
A Haunt of Childhood	153
Lines on a Portrait	154
A Legend of the Heart	156
My Lady's Chamber	160
The People's Prayer	162
To my Infant Sister	165
Early Love	168
We have met	172
The Arab's Lament	174
Thoughts in Absence	176
The Pledge	178
The Dying Boy	179
I saw thee and blessed thee	182
Oh, am I not thy bride ?	184
A Ballad	187
The Warrior's Death	189
The Request	192

A VOICE FROM THE TOWN,

In Three Parts.

PART I.

ARGUMENT.

PART I.

Lot of the author—Dreams, and waking thoughts by night—Children—Apprehensions—Abandonment of home—Love for the lost—Remembrances—Friends—A Parent's love—Death of a child—Dear Connexions—Important events—The world's censure—Happy hours; or, the social circle—Friends described—House of birth—Old faces—Aged grandsire—Sleeping-chamber—Old domestic—Author's father—Shadows of the past—Feverish dreams—Sounds in the street.

A VOICE FROM THE TOWN.

PART I.

I HAVE not liv'd a pamper'd, toilless life,
I have not couch'd in luxury and ease,
And pass'd my days 'mid menials and pomp ;
My lot has been to suffer and to do,
To rack my spirit for the means to live,
To bear the frowns of iron-hearted men,
And congregate with those who lov'd me not,
With those who sympathis'd with wealth alone,
Shunning communion with a coinless man.
My lot has been to bear throughout the day
The taunts of many, ignorant and proud,
Rejoicing even in their very faults,
And seeking means each folly to display,
More foolish than the swan, which hides its feet.
My lot has been to feel unutter'd pangs,
And eat the wormwood of my bitter thoughts ;

For who a bitterer misery can know
Than he who, deeply, keenly sensitive
To every word or look which speaks contempt,
Must meekly bear the insults and the sneers
Of those who ask for that he cannot give ?

Oh, many an hour, and many a painful day,
Have I toil'd on with sad and bursting heart,
And sought at night the couch that brought no rest,
For sleep was only agonising dreams,
And every interval before mine eyes

The ghosts uprose of past and coming days :

Oh, who hath felt those moments of despair,
Those dreary, dreadful gaps in human life,
When doubts and fears erect their giant heads,
And on we travel o'er the waste of fate,
Whilst every fount of joy seems dry and void,

And not a gleam of sunshine lights the scene ?

Who hath e'er had those plague-spots on his soul,
Who hath e'er pass'd such Erebus of woe,
And not bless'd God when broke the morning light ?

Such my dark fate hath been— my children's smiles
Gave only sorrow to my aching heart,
Their cheeks of bloom, their pretty, pleasant ways,
Their buoyant forms, and careless, merry laugh,
That should have been my solace, were my grief.

I saw around me spring dear flowers of love,
And knew not when their blossoms might be nipp'd ;
I saw them bloom and beautify my path,
And knew not when the spoiler's hand might come,
To blight and scatter all their leaves of joy.
Those days have pass'd—the home of many years
Hath been abandon'd—I must seek anew,
In other paths, the means whereby to live :
With a small band of tried and constant friends,
To cheer my spirit and impel me on,
Be Hope my pilot, and in God my trust.
How to the memory things departed cling !
How the heart fastens on the ever-lost !
Softening each harshness, and investing all
With a subdued and melancholy charm.
Oft in my lonely musings, day and night,
Thoughts of that dwelling crowd upon my brain,
Bringing to my remembrance hopes and fears,
That in its walls alternate sway'd my mind,
And forms and faees, once familiar,
And daily seen, till they became as things
That were with my existence almost blent :
The wayfarers that trode the busy street ;
The buildings that were ever in my view,
Till they became as though instinct with life—

Acquaintances I daily look'd to see ;
The friends that there betimes sat at my board,
Partaking of my humble fare with smiles,
Whilst all was season'd by our social chat,
And observations sage on books and men.

Three of my babes there first beheld the light,
And twin'd their little arms around my neck,
Whilst in my heart a father's fondness grew—
That fervent love, which neither time, nor space,
Nor base ingratitude, nor guilty shame
Can e'er subdue. All other ties may break—
The love of woman fades at times away,
And dieth even at a look or tone ;
Friends may depart like flies with summer-hours,
When the dark winter of our lot comes on,
But strong affection, in a parent's breast,
Liveth for evermore, a changeless flower.

One of my cherish'd flock lies buried low—
Just as its little lips had learn'd to lisp,
And call with fondest accents on my name—
Just as it knew my step upon the floor,
And gladness fill'd its eyes at my approach,
The infant angel sought its native Heaven,
And left its parents sorrowing for its loss :
Its voice is unforgotten melody—it comes,

Like notes of breeze-woke harp, upon mine ear,
 And, as a golden mist, its silken hair
 And radiant eyes sail 'twixt me and the sun.
 There some who call me friend I first beheld—
 Connections dear with kindred minds were form'd—
 Strong intellectual links, defying all
 To crush or sever, save the hand of Death ;
 And there occur'd events, whose hue must tinge,
 Whether for good or evil, all my life,
 Implanting in my mind fresh germs of thought ;
 And teaching me to study and explore
 Rich veins of knowledge, hitherto unsought.
 Farewell ! thou home of many cares and joys !
 I ne'er may cross thy well-known threshold more—
 Though small the space that keepeth us apart,
 'Tis as impassable as boundless sea !

The world hath often blam'd me—mindless men
 Have look'd upon my deeds with jaundic'd eyes,
 Giving the colour of their own foul thoughts
 Unto mine every action—they have turn'd
 The highest, best aspirings of my soul
 To scorpions that stung my very heart ;
 Thoughts, chang'd to acts that they might bless my race,
 And propagate the principles of love

And sympathy amongst my fellow-men,
Have been tradueed, distorted, and malign'd,
Till they have stood as spectres in my path ;
Frowning defiance in their maker's face,
Like to the fabled monster, which 'tis said
The student rais'd to mock and curse himself.
Great God of Heaven ! who know'st my every thought,
To Thee I now appeal, with fearless heart,
And ask Thee if I have not wish'd to bless !
My deeds are known unto Thee—the wide seroll
Is spread before Thy bright all-seeing eye ;
Look on it, sean each thought—by Thy deeree,
And not by that of man, I stand or fall !
I know that I am frail, in spirit weak,
In mind and judgment easily beguil'd ;
But when, in calm and unvoic'd solitude,
Whether secluded in my lowly room,
Or wandering lone in unfrequented paths,
Or near the foaming torrent's rapid dash,
Or by the waters of a quiet stream,
Or standing 'neath the shade of towering cliff,
Dark rocks around me, and the sky above—
In every scene, in every mood, oh, God !
Hath not my soul been tuned to love and Thee ?
If I did e'er premeditate a line,

If I did e'er give utterance to a thought,
Whose object was to crush my fellow-worm ;
If I did e'er, unless my judgment err'd,
Fail to award to each his meed of praise ;
If I did e'er, by word or action, strive
To cheek the onward course of Liberty ;
If I have, knowingly, defam'd the good,
Or lent my aid to glorify the base ;
If I have coin'd my heart to lies for dross,
Or woven vile webs to trap the guileless mind—
Oh, Thou who rulest over earth and man,
Judge as I should be judg'd—I bow to thee.

Never will earth to me wear face of gloom,
Whilst kindred spirits with me hold commune,
And bless me with that sympathy of heart,
Which lives not in the worshippers of gold.
I do not seek for wealth to bless my lot—
I do not crave the many gauds of life
Which crowd the dwellings of the pamper'd great :
Give me a humble and a peaceful cot,
Let my dear children have a homely meal,
And lowly couch whereon at night to rest ;
Grant me but these, and I with thankful mind
Will spend my days, and praise the God of all.
Why should I not, for I have happy hours,

Which they who labour in the fields of gain,
And look for comfort to their shining hoards,
Can never purchase, and can never know.

Oft upon winter eves, when winds blow cold,
And guards of snow keep hush'd the noisy street,
In social circle do I meet the friends,
The few companions who are most belov'd ;
In converse intellectual doth time
Pass with an arrowy swiftness o'er our heads :
The poets who have made the world bow down,
And offer worship at the shrine of song,
The glorious living and the mighty dead,
The great and good of every time and land,
All, all by turns engross our thoughts and words.

The warrior's prowess, and the gory field,
The plotting statesman, on his schemes intent,
The lore which shows the briefest way to wealth,
Form of our thoughts no part—we only seek
To elevate our minds, and contemplate
All that is pure and worthy to be priz'd.

Not undistinguish'd are the friends I love—
Many have freely shaken hands with Fame,
And will go down with honour to the tomb,
Leaving behind the rich ore of their souls,
Stamp'd with the die which makes posterity

Treasure the coin with more than miser care.
 One is a poet who, with voice of power,
 Hath spoken boldly of his fellows' wrongs,
 Till he hath caus'd an echo through the land ;
 And, in the polish'd spendour of his verse,
 Nature, as in a mirror, sees her face :
 He from the bondage of his lowly birth
 Hath "bought a ransom," and appeareth now
 A man whom God had destin'd for high state.*
 One is a flower of darker hue, and wears
 The Indian tinge upon his manly brow,
 And on his lips a bland and pleasant smile,—
 A smile which springeth from his glowing heart,
 "Open as day to melting charity"—
 He hath paid tribute at the Muses' shrine.†
 He who with smiling glance looks watchful on,
 With an expression quiet and subdued,
 Hath rare and valued talents, and his heart
 Is full of kindness, and of friendly fire ;
 Though young in years, his quick, observant mind
 Hath glean'd the knowledge of maturer days,
 And to the public he outpours his lore
 In keen critiques, and searching views of life.‡

* Mr. John Critchley Prince, Author of "Hours with the Muses."

† Robert Rose, Esq. (the Bard of Colour), Author of the "Cypress Wreath," &c.

‡ Mr. George Falkner, Editor of "Bradshaw's Journal."

Who is that veteran grey, with port erect,
And frame of sinewy make?—Go, ask of Fame,
And it will tell thee more than pen of mine:
Long hath he pin'd in gloomy prison-walls,
Suffering for Freedom's cause oppression's thrall,
And lifting up in evil days his voice,
Till might bow'd down beneath the sway of right;
But he hath told his sufferings to the world,
In style as free and vigorous as himself,
And he hath pour'd forth many lays of power,
Fearless and true, and fervent as his heart.*
Mark you that gentleman, for such he is—
I mean not in the vague and hackney'd sense
Oft us'd by men who pander to the world,
And pay their homage unto wealth and garb:
Gentle is he in manners and in mind,
Lovely in spirit, and of liberal soul,
With taste refin'd and prepossessing mien,
And kind alike to lowly and to great.†
Who cometh next, with frank and honest face,
And speech of fearless manliness and strength,
Caring nor seeking whom he most may please,

* Mr. Samuel Bamford, Author of "Hours in the Bowers," and
"Passages from the Life of a Radical."

† John Hill, Esq.

But uttering freely what his heart dictates,
O'ercharg'd with love to God, and man, and truth ?
Look on him, reader, and when thou has view'd
And fairly scan'd his acts, 'twere well if thou
Could'st say unto thyself " E'en such am I."*
He with the bold expansive front, and free
And open features, hath a mind as fair
As is the index whielh thou look'st upon.
Not idly hath he sought the Muse's smiles,
And labour'd in the cause of Liberty ;
But time may bring him yet a brighter fame,
If he adventure boldly on his course,
And strike again the lyre with vigorous hand.†
See my kind friend with placid face and tongue,
True to the path of rectitude, and firm
In every act, and utterance of all
Which hath in view a good and virtuous end ;
Liberal in counsel, and not less in soul :
Time passeth lightly over him, nor writes
A single wrinkle on his thoughtful brow—
Long may he live to sing his Scottish lays,
And cheer my spirit with his quiet smile ! ‡

* Mr. John Dickinson.

† Mr. George Richardson.

‡ Mr. Jonathan Kershaw.

I would not wish to have a breast more pure,
More full of feeling, and of ardent zeal
For all that merits sympathy and aid,
Than his who now claims notice and regard ;
Though young, his face is calm and pale with thought,
And in the depths of his clear, earnest eyes
There lurks a hidden and a glowing fire,
Which may in after-days burn bright and long :
Thou gentle follower of poetic art,
Lover of all things beautiful and fair,
Onwards and prosper in a glad career ! *Not worship only of the lip and knee
Asketh Religion from its devotees—
A truthful spirit, and a heart sincere
Praisers of God must to his temple bring,
Or all the rest is but a cymbal's sound,
Or gilt that decks corruption's sepulchre ;
Then let me speak of one whose reverent mind
Sees God in everything, and all things good ;
Who treasures up the old and Holy Book,
Like a rich casket fill'd with precious gold,
And warreth, like a martyr, for the word :
I know that kindness overflows his soul,

* Thomas Arkell Tidmarsh, Esq.

And were his means as large as is his love,
 Little would know his fellow-man of want,
 And even now his actions tell his worth.*

The next is one who followeth an art
 Which is the source of many beauteous forms,
 And giveth substance to poetic thoughts—
 Painting divine—to Poesy a twin :
 Oh, may he keep in view a lasting fame,
 Neglecting not the power which now he hath,
 And not unhonour'd will his genius be.†
 Nor must I pass that “ noticeable man,”
 Whose voice at times comes loudly on the ear,
 Freighted with sage remarks on bards of old :
 He was not form'd in a poetic mould,
 If poet's form ethereal should be ;
 But still his mind is of no common cast,
 And he hath gain'd a name amongst his race.‡
 The Naworth poet let me not forget,
 Whose heart, though pain'd and bruis'd by adverse fate,
 Can yet aspire to high poetic themes,
 And sympathize with suffering humble worth.§

* Mr. William Earnshaw.

† Mr. George Liddell.

‡ Mr. Elijah Ridings, Author of the “Village Muse,” &c.

§ Mr. John Scholes, Author of the “ Bridal of Naworth,” and “Miscellaneous Poems.”

Many the diamonds left within the mine,
Which never knew the lapidary's art—
A gem is he whom now I look upon,
And, though unpolish'd, he within himself
Contains a fund of unemitted light,
Which time and fostering care may yet bring forth.*
That strange, eccentric wight, who cometh now,
Is one whose humourous strains are often heard—
Relish'd the most when chanted by himself.†
The modest, smiling face, which last I greet,
Is one whose station takes not from his worth,
For he can boast a good and kindly soul,
And in his mind are gender'd happy thoughts,
Which oft gush forth in sweet and pleasant rhyme.‡
These are the friends who make existence sweet,
And take the poison from life's bitter draughts.
Others there are, who, though I name them not,
Still dwell within my memory and heart.
Oh, not in vain, then, do I seek to find
Within the social circle happy hours,
When temper'd by discretion are our joys,
And Discord ever shuns the magic ring,
Scar'd by the Angels, Charity and Love.

* Mr. Benjamin Stott.

† Mr. Alexander Wilson, Author of "Songs of the Wilsons."

‡ Mr. R. W. Procter (Sylvan).

What varied feelings gather round my heart,
What long-lost memories visit me again,
As on yon dwelling dark is fix'd my gaze ;
Within its walls was heard my first weak cry—
There did my mother kiss her earliest babe,
And press my form unto her yearning heart,
With tears of joy, and a thanksgiving prayer.
I do remember me some years ago,
I linger'd near that once-beloved place,
And at its threshold did the master stand :
He was a stranger, but a kindly man,
And when I said 'twas there that I was born,
He spoke unto me with a friendly voice,
And ask'd if I would step within the walls,
To look once more on each familiar room.
I enter'd in, and soon the place became
Peopled with faces of the olden time,
And the dead look'd upon me from their graves,
And their dear voices sounded in mine ears,
E'en as they look'd and spoke while yet a child.
Once more I stood between my grandsire's knees,
Whilst rested on my head his aged hand,
And, seated in his antique cushion'd chair,
He read me lessons from the Holy Book,
And bade me all my days to walk with God.

I thought, too, of the time, when older grown,
I sate beside him on the Sabbath-day,
And, of my learning proud, read verse for verse.
Again I saw him, in his life's last hours,
When he himself had grown a very child,
Enfeebled, lying on a couch of pain,
Troubled with all a sick man's strange caprice,
Taking no food, save from my youthful hand.
The little chamber trod I once again,
Where I had slept full many a happy sleep,
Haunted, perchance, by wild and frolic dreams,
And waking up to run my race of joy.
I saw our old domestic's quiet face,
She who had nursed my father when a babe,
And still surviv'd to watch and guard his son,
Following my footsteps up the stair each night,
Patient and silent waiting for the light,
Whilst I repeated low my simple prayer,
Before I clamber'd to my downy bed.
My father! in those times thy frame was strong,
And thy cheek wore the clear, fresh hue of health,
And merry laughter from thy lips was heard;
But now, alas, hath sickness bow'd thee down,
And pale disease sits on thy sunken face,
Scarce ever cheer'd, e'en by a languid smile.

I could not linger long within those walls,
For every room seem'd haunted by the lost,
Crowded with shadows of departed joys,
Of joys that nought could ever bring me back :
So press'd their weight upon my sorrowing heart,
That when once more I pac'd the dusty street,
I felt as one who leaves behind a tomb.

The iron tongues of time have long peal'd forth
The mid-hour of the night—with sullen sound
Their tones again ring on my startled ear,
As I awake from fever-troubled dream.
My lips are parch'd, my frame is tir'd and spent,
For I have rac'd o'er hot and sandy plains,
And I have climb'd up steep and horrid cliffs ;
Plung'd desperate in the dark and rapid stream,
And leap'd o'er chasms where one false bound were death,
Whilst the loose soil hath shiver'd 'neath my feet :
Monsters, whose likeness waking eye ne'er saw,
Changing each moment both in shape and size—
Now shooting out to most gigantic height,
Then again shrinking to a dwarfish mould,
With features varying like a storm-blown vane,
And in their every aspect loathsome, foul,

Demons and fiends, hideous in mien and form,
Have follow'd hot and closely in my track,
Turning the air to poison with their breath,
And howling in mine ears loud shrieks of hate.
Now whilst my mind is scarcely dispossess'd
Of the wild phantoms of my dreadful dream,
Again I hear a loud and piercing shriek,
And bitter curses borne upon the wind ;
Words hiss upon mine ear, whose very sound
Strikes on the mind like to a poison'd shaft,
Wounding and shattering pure and virtuous thoughts.
The words are breath'd by lips which God design'd
Should utter only syllables to bless,
And soothe man's heart, as oil the billowy sea :
'Tis woman's voice that mingles with the blast—
Fierce imprecations from a female tongue,
And passionate bursts of scorn and reckless rage,
And impure thoughts in horrid language drest,
Like pestilential taint, pollute the night,
Blent with some drunken ruffian's hoarse deep oath,
Perchance the prelude to a fearful blow.
Oh, most revolting and debasing thought,
That she who should grow up our light and guide,
Whose mind should glass all chaste and holy joys,

Should be herself by wandering lights misled,
Till the bright mirror of her once pure soul,
Mildew'd by sin, should be all blotted o'er,
Distorting every image it reflects.—
The sounds have fled—I court again repose :
Than such reality more welcome sleep,
Throng'd though it be with angry, vision'd fiends.

END OF PART I.



A VOICE FROM THE TOWN.

PART II.



ARGUMENT.

PART II.

The Gin Palace, and its victims—The Lake of Intemperance—The Prison Van, and its inmates—Love of Nature—Morning Rambles—Longing for the Country—Works of God and Man—Beauties of England—Peak of Derbyshire—Garden of the Peak—Peverel's Tower—Chatsworth—Haddon Hall; and Keats' “Eve of St. Agnes”—Monsal Dale.

A VOICE FROM THE TOWN.

PART II.

I STAND within a wide and lofty room,
Whose roof is fretted o'er with rare device,
Rich with the painter's and the gilder's art ;
The walls are cover'd with full many a scene
Of love, romance, and war, on land and sea ;
Mirrors of price reflect the gazer's form,
And pillars bright, and burnish'd chandeliers,
And moon-like lights shed brilliance over all.
The place might be some temple of delight,
Form'd to give joy to proud and wealthy man ;
But 'tis accurs'd—and I could almost deem
The lamps were demon-heads that call'd to sin,
Or lights that lead to darkness and despair—
The pictur'd walls seem'd dabbled o'er with blood,
Drain'd from the fountains of the human heart.
Look on the inmates of that splendid place !

With sunken eyes, and cheeks emaciate,
And forms envelop'd in foul rags, not clad,
They crowd around, and ask the drink of death—
The drink of poverty, disgrace, and shame.
The glittering, gorgeous casks are rang'd around,
Mark'd with the names of various deadly draughts ;
Some sweet to taste, in operation slow ;
Others strong, burning, maddening, swift—all sure.
Behold yon female, young, but worn and wan,
With swimming eyes and inarticulate speech,
The widow of a drunkard—she did seek
Comfort from that which all her hope destroy'd—
To drown her sorrows in the liquid fire
That flames and sparkles in the crystal glass—
That scorching lava of the human soul,
Which bears more ruin, in its burning tide,
Than e'er was vomited from out the jaws
Of those terrific mountains which have whelm'd
The pride of cities with their horrid spawn.
Look on yon figure, grim'd and sear'd with toil—
Gone is the self-esteem which once was his,
Bas'd on his strength of limb and skilful hand ;
No more with swelling heart he thinks of home,
And of his household treasures boasting speaks ;
No more with joy he views his children's forms,

And hears their prattle with a fond delight ;
No more they come when sounds his welcome voice,
And cling around him with hilarious shouts ;
No more they list, with anxious ear, the clock
To tell the hour which brought their parent home,
Whilst at the sound their mother's beaming eyes,
And pleasant smiles, illum'd her quiet face,
As quick aside her work she threw, and rose,
With busy actions, to prepare the meal,
The simple meal, which cheer'd the son of toil.
That home for him hath lost its wonted charm ;
Of household treasures he no more can boast—
His children's forms are cloth'd in ragged garb,
Their youthful cheeks have lost their roseate hue,
And at his voice in tears they trembling fly ;
Instead of fond caress descends a blow,
And reckless curses stop their cries for food.
With haggard cheek his suffering trembling wife,
The cheerful evening meal no more prepares—
An empty cupboard mocks and grieves her heart ;
And even if the means were hers to spread
The fare of old before her husband now,
Too well she knows the drunkard's taste would spurn
The simple beverage with an oath of scorn.
Away with thought !—fill high the glass again !

The demon-palace hath a blaze of light,
And crowds of victims quaff the drink of death ;
Some grasp each other's hands in maudlin mood,
And vow eternal friendship, which endures
The draining of another glass, and then
The friends are turn'd to fierce and bitter foes,
And blows are interchang'd, and words of hate.
Some in the ears of heedless strangers breathe
The seerets they had treasur'd up for years ;
Some scatter round, with hands profuse, the coin
Which is not theirs to spend—they dream not ther
Of stony prison-walls and gloomy cell,
Ere long to be their portion, or perchance
A dreary exile to a convict's home,
Where they must live in chains a life of toil.
Away with thought!—it is a glorious scene,
At which the fiends might clap their hands for joy,
And hold in hell a feast to celebrate
The happy tidings that a host of guests
Were paving for themselves a broad highway
O'er which, with headlong and infuriate speed,
They might rush madly, in uncheck'd career,
To the eternal regions of the damn'd.
There beauty without virtue stalks about,
The painted herald of her own disgrace,

Making strange mockery at her fallen state,
Her lips polluted with foul words of crime,
And chang'd the very nature of her sex.
There is the mother with her shrivell'd babe,
Pouring the poison in its crying mouth ;
There is the beldame, with a trembling hand,
Lifting the potion to her blacken'd lips ;
There is the beggar, spending dol'd-out alms
With a free spirit and a liberal hand ;
There is the lurking thief, with wandering look,
Strengthening his courage for the nightly prowl—
Away with thought !—it is a glorious scene !

I had a vision—it was not of night,
But came unto me in the day's full noon.
Methought I gaz'd upon a horrid lake,
Whose banks no shrub nor herbage green e'er deck'd ;
No tall tree lifted up its branching arms.
But all was naked, barren, black, and bare ;
The birds that hover'd o'er its surface fell,
And powerless sunk within its noisome wave ;
Wild beasts of prey, with ravenous rage athirst,
That came and of its baleful contents drank,
With jaws of foam and red and glaring eyes,
Howl'd forth a yell of agony and pain,

And madly fled into the woods again.
Inscrib'd with characters that each might read,
Huge gloomy banners floated all around,
Bearing the words "Whoever drinks must die!"
Yet still did crowds press onwards to the banks,
Still onwards roll'd a dark and living flood :
Beauty and ugliness, and youth and age :
The sinewy ruffian, with a form erect,
And hoary villainy, with shoulders bent,
And trembling limbs supported by a staff ;
Those who had scarcely pass'd the teens of life,
And yet display'd a wrinkled, hollow cheek ;
The mother, with her infant in her arms,
A babe that ne'er had borne a father's name ;
The shapeless cripple 'tween his crutches slung ;
The soldier, who had toil'd 'mid smoke and blood,
The ill-paid victor of full many a field ;
The limb-shorn sailor, who, in many a fight
Had help'd to feed the monsters of the deep ;
The wretch whose conscience mock'd him like a fiend ;
The man who had endur'd the world's hard gripe,
And he who had oppress'd the suffering poor ;
The labourer, reckless because freely paid,
And he whose toil scarce furnish'd him with food—
A motley and a miserable band,

The throng press'd forward to the deadly lake.
Some on the dreadful words a moment gaz'd,
And, with a shudder, would have turn'd again,
But those behind impell'd them fiercely on,
And they bent down, and pale and trembling drank,
Moderate at first, and then a deeper draught.
Some doff'd the greasy coverings from their heads,
And fill'd them with the element of death;
Some bar'd their feet and thus were goblets found ;
Some scoop'd the liquor with their bony hands,
And some, with visage red and eyes inflam'd,
Greedily plung'd their heads into the stream,
Taking a beastlike attitude to make
Themselves more loathsome than the loathliest brute.
Then came a scene unpaintable by pen,
Of horrid revelry and discord wild ;
Laughter which with a shriek was strangely blent,
And loud unmeaning shouts, half rage, half joy ;
Dances uncouth, and impish leaps in air ;
Freaks most fantastic, rude and apish tricks ;
Features distorted into hideous forms,
Some twisted by the agony of pain,
The dread forerunner of an awful death,
And others in a frightful mockery shap'd,
To scorn and ridicule e'en life's last throes.

Ungovernable discord reign'd, and feuds
Savage and furious toss'd about the throng,
Till it became a storm of human hearts,
A dark tempestuous sea of fleshy waves.
The son uprais'd his hand against his sire,
And struck the giver of his life to earth ;
The daughter with the mother warfare wag'd,
And sisters wreak'd upon each other blows,
And, like twin-Cains, brother with brother strove ;
Old friends encounter'd, and, with wolfish looks,
Seem'd as they now would rend each other's hearts ;
Some threw their arms aloft in stupid glee,
And others reel'd along with bat-like eyes ;
Some sought, to look profoundly grave and wise,
Then broke into a laugh they knew not why ;
Some strove, and vainly strove, to utter speech,
Their lolling tongues swell'd to a wordless mass ;
Some crept along with weak and childlike tread,
And sunk, down-trodden, crush'd by myriad feet.
Death walk'd amid the ranks, and numbers fell,
In black unsightly heaps, when wav'd his arm.
Some died with hand uplifted high to strike,
And some with curse half utter'd on their lips,
And howls and groans and imprecations deep,
In place of prayers, their parting breaths gave forth.

Still did the work of death go swiftly on—
In heaps they perish'd—oh, more blind than flies
That taste and die around the poison'd cup ;
And still they onwards came, and still they drank,
And downwards fell and miserably died.

My heart grew sick—I could not longer gaze :
Just then a voice made whisper in mine ear—
“ It is no baseless vision thou hast seen,
Take warning from the lesson, and depart ;
If thou would'st learn the name of yon dark lake,
I breathe it now—it is **INTEMPERANCE !** ”
I turn'd amaz'd—nought living could I see—
I look'd again, but lake and all were gone !

The skies are dark, the rain comes dashing down,
And trade-driven men are hurrying through the streets ;
The thick drops batter at my window-panes,
The wind is hurrying by like viewless fiend,
Or phantom screeching in a sinner's ear,
A sinner doom'd to die for murder foul,
Who shrieketh in his victim-haunted sleep,
And wakes to gaze upon the hangman's face.

The smoke beats downward from the chimney tops,
The homeless wretch creeps soak'd and shivering on,
Whilst rattling vehicles are sweeping by,

Bearing the sons of commerce to their homes.
Now rumbling o'er the dull and stony street,
There hurries on a gloomy-looking thing,
The sombre chariot of vice and sin.
The barr'd and guarded dreary prison-van.
What guilty hearts are throbbing in that cage !
What vengeful eyes are fiercely scowling there,
Like new-caught tigers' glaring in their den !
There may be heard the hoarsely-mutter'd curse,
And there are heard the moanings of despair,
And there are breath'd the first low sobs of crime,
And bitter wailings of young erring hearts—
Children whose births their parents hail'd with joy,
And bless'd them as the harbingers of bliss,
The bliss that was to sweeten life's last cup ;
Fair girls are there whose beauty was their bane,
Whose tones had been the music of their homes,
Whose eyes once shown as bright as sunlit wells
Whose souls were once as pure as summer-springs,
But unto them their loveliness had been
As gift bestow'd by some unholy power,
To bring on the possessor doom of awe.
There, too, is heard the laugh of harden'd guilt,
Callous alike to infamy and shame—
The sinner steep'd in crimes of blackest hue,

Who mocks the ear with strange and dreadful jest.
It passeth on, that moving charnel-house,
Freighted with dark remains of virtuous hearts.

I love to stand upon a mountain's top,
And see below the cottage-homes of men,
Far down beneath, like shadowy snowy specks ;
I love to be where not a sound can come,
And I can feel as though alone with God,
Where not an eye can look into mine own,
Or still the secret heavings of my soul,
Which seems as if 'twould quit its clay abode,
And seek again the Heaven whence it came.
Oft have my footsteps strayed at early morn
Beyond the precincts of the smoky town,
Where I might wander through the lonely lanes,
And breathe awhile the sweet, untainted air,
And listen to the lark's clear hymn of dawn.
All rural objects give to me a bliss,
All Nature's sights and sounds to me are dear,
And to my spirit bring a child's delight :
The azure bells that deck the verdant hedge ;
The primrose with its pale and sunny hue ;
The rich-hued violet with its eyes of gold,
Gleaming like jewels in a velvet fold ;

The modest daisy, meek and “ crimson-tipp’d ; ”
The shining yellow cups amid the grass,
All give to me a joy I cannot speak.
The trees I meet again as ancient friends,
And smile to see them in their summer dress,
Rob’d in a gay, rejoicing garb of green,
With blossoms shining out among their leaves,
Dancing, like winged fays, to every breeze ;
And oft in winter, when the icy ground
Hath shiver’d sparkling ’neath my active tread,
Mine eyes have dwelt upon those leafless trees,
And as I gaz’d upon each naked branch,
Within my breast hath stirr’d a sympathy—
Those rugged forms have all look’d animate,
Endow’d with feeling and with human thought ;
Each branch hath seem’d a hand to supplicate
That Heaven again would send them summer-hours,
And feed them with its blessed sun and dews.

The sun is showering down his beams of light,
And the hot streets send up their wreaths of dust,
Yet still moves on that ever-rolling stream
Which hath its course ’mid crowded haunts of men ;
The merchant still is on his gain intent,
Nor casts a glance upon the cloudless sky ;

The belching chimneys still pour forth their smoke,
As if in mockery of the heaven above ;
The toiling artizan still moles his way,
And all goes on in its accustom'd round.

My spirit thirsteth for the pleasant fields,
And the free breeze that sweeps o'er hill and vale,
As one who droops and faints for lack of air,
Or craves for water in a feverish dream.

Oh, for a ramble in a forest dim !

Oh, for a lonely walk amid the woods,
Where the light scarce can struggle through the trees,
Where twilight dwells for ever grey and pale,
Like aged monk within his cloister-walls,
Where human voices can be heard no more,
Where not a sound e'er breaks the leafy calm,
Save song of bird, or passing breeze's sigh,
Or tiny water murmuring on its way !

I pine and sicken 'mid these throng'd abodes,
My nerves are shatter'd with the ceaseless hum
Of tongues that ever speak of care and toil ;
The hurrying sound of many trampling feet,
And all the noises of the busy streets,
Lie on my soul with an oppressive weight.

Oh, God ! Thine is a sweet and pleasant world,
And all Thy works are pregnant with delight ;

Thy hand hath bless'd and beautify'd them all,
And made each seene a souree of holy joy—
From the huge mountain towering to the skies,
To the small flower that hideth in the grass.
What are the palaces of boasting man,
What are the monuments which he calls vast,
His temples and his splendid palaces,
His marts for commerce, and his winged ships,
And all the thousand glories of his art,
Compar'd to Nature, where Thou reign'st alone ?

England ! thou hast, within thy wave-girt clime,
Scenes of magnificence and beauty rare,
Too often scorn'd by thy ungrateful sons,
Who leave unseen thy lovely hills and vales,
And seek for pleasure 'neath a foreign sky.
Had I the means--had I the power to roam,
With uncheck'd footsteps o'er my native land,
Ne'er would my bosom know a wilder wish—
Where I was born there would I live and die.
Oh, can I e'er forget the deep delight
I felt when wandering, Derby, through thy shire,
Amid the glories of thy wondrous Peak !
There the grey mountain lifteth up its head,
And rears its giant form in sullen state,

Whilst by its base the subject waters creep,
And murmuring kiss the hoary monarch's foot.
There horrid caverns ope their yawning mouths,
Filling the explorer's mind with silent awe ;
And, pacing o'er their windings vast and dark,
He feels arise within his inmost heart
Thoughts of the power and mystery of God.
There may you wander through the wild ravine,
Where on each side frown down the savage rocks,
Like rugged monsters watching o'er the place,
Who ever and anon seem gathering round
To bar your further progress through the scene ;
But onwards press, and pass the craggy gates—
Then on your gaze will burst a lovely vale,
With emerald fields and streamlets flashing bright,
Fair as the dawn of life, and fresh and pure,
Bathing its quiet beauty in the sun,
And looking like a fragment rent from Heaven—
This is the flowery Eden of the Peak !
There, too, is fierce and haughty Peverel's tower,
The tower which Scott hath hallow'd by romance,
Standing in ruins on its lofty cliff.
Wandering along by rivers' blossom'd banks,
Where golden glow-worms lurk like starry drops,
Still the hoar hills are guardians of the way,

And in the shadow of the twilight hour
Seem the proud battlements of armed knight.
Go, look on Chatsworth's fair and stately halls—
The gorgeous palace of a powerful Duke—
Standing amid a rich and wide domain,
And stor'd with all that wealth and art call forth
To decorate the dwellings of the great—
The sculptor's visionary forms of grace,
And marble statues of the mighty dead ;
The bold creations of the painter's skill,
Canvass that glows with all the hues of life ;
The curious wonders of the carver's power,
Display'd in quaint and marvellous device ;
The high-roof'd temple lin'd with splendid tomes,
Fill'd with the thoughts of dead and living sage,
Of wit, divine, historian, and bard.
Go, gaze upon the lakes and fountains bright,
That cast their silvery wreaths upon the air,
Whilst fruits are bursting on the trees around,
And flowers and plants, of cost and beauty rare,
Are sending out their odours to the breeze.
Go, wander through this gathering of delights,
Then leave the Paradise of modern time,
And seek old Haddon's grey and ancient halls,
That linger as a shadow of the past ;

Tread for awhile its court-yard, moss-o'ergrown,
And look upon the venerable pile ;
Then bend your footsteps through its spacious rooms,
Once throng'd with valiant knights and ladies fair,
And ringing with the laugh and revel-song.
The bluff retainers there no more are found,
No more the minstrel sings of dame and knight,
The sound of music long hath died away,
The banquet long hath ceas'd to load the board—
Vassail, and page, and dame and knight are gone ;
But breathes there not a melancholy tone
Throughout the old and desolated pile,
Which, like the voice of old affection, comes
And leaves a gloom upon the buoyant heart ?
Who that hath read the strain of youthful Keats,*
But “turns, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,”
The “thoughtful Madeline,” who long ago
Fled on St. Agnes’ eve into the storm ?
Who does not think upon that casement high,
“All garlanded with carven imag’ries,”
“And diamonded with panes of quaint devicee,”
And shield that “blush’d with blood of queens and kings,”
And Porphyro who gaz’d upon the maid,

* Haddon Hall is said to be the scene of Keats’s exquisite poem of the “Eve of St. Agnes.”

Nor mov'd nor spoke, "she look'd so dreamingly" ?
Ascend the towers, and cast your gaze around,
Where Nature smiles as in the olden time—
The stream still goes rejoicing on its way,
The meadows still are sprinkled o'er with buds,
And birds are singing 'mid the branches green,
Or soaring upwards towards the azure sky,
Which smileth still as at Creation's birth.

Man's mightiest works are frail—the works of God,
Unchang'd, behold his massiest structures fall,
And wanderers in some after-age may roam
To look on Chatsworth's grey and broken walls,
Even as we gaze on those of Haddon now.—

Reader, if thou would'st leave behind the world,
The busy world and every thought of gain,
To dwell amid the solitudes of life,
Direct thy steps to Monsal's quiet Dale :
It is in sooth a calm and beauteous spot,
A glorious vale far down beneath the rocks,
Where peace and bliss might, undisturb'd, repose,
And man forget the names of sin and hate.

The sun was setting when I first beheld
This loveliest of England's lovely vales,
And gaz'd into its depths with soul entranc'd.
I could not breathe—my very heart was still'd

By my intense and speechless wonderment,
And then I wish'd that there were fixed my home,
So that my life might, even as the stream
That mov'd below me with a noiseless flow,
Pass on unvex'd unto its closing day.

The mountains were around it rude and high,
And rocks, in varied shape, were cluster'd thick,
Like demons gazing on a home of bliss,
That crime had shut for ever from their tread.

The rich, declining light lay on its turf,
And ting'd the waters with a hue of gold ;
The birds were warbling their glad twilight hymn,
The lambs were playing in the scented grass,

And on the banks of the fair river Wye
A lonely angler sat in lazy mood,
Patiently waiting for his finny prey.—

My blessings on the place ! for it hath been
One of the shining lights on memory's sea,
And oft hath beam'd upon my troubled heart
When all around hath worn a garb of gloom !



A VOICE FROM THE TOWN.

PART III.

ARGUMENT.

PART III.

Books—Chetham College—The Collegiate Church of Manchester—Churchyards—Funeral Urns—A Winter's Night—The Waits—Fire at Night—An Invitation—Conclusion.



A VOICE FROM THE TOWN.

PART III.

WHAT would the world be were it not for books ?
What treasures of the past to us were lost,
What stores of knowledge would be unexplor'd,
What countless hoards of truth from us were hidden,
Like gems that lie down in the ocean's depths,
Had not the student brought them into light ?
Now knowledge with its temples throngs the shores
Of England, and its sons may enter there,
To drink in large and intellectual draughts :
Wealthy and poor alike may quaff the streams
Whose waters nourish noble thoughts and deeds—
The fountains of the mind gush freely forth,
All barriers rent asunder by the Press.
Now we can hold at once within our grasp
The chronicles of all the climes of earth,
And, seated by our quiet hearths at eve,

We see great empires in their pride of power,
We mark them flourish, and behold them fall.
The grave ingulphs the gifted dead in vain,
They speak to us eternally in books,
They converse with us in our lonely hours,
And greet us with the aspect of a friend ;
They tell us all they felt, and all they thought—
The treasur'd wisdom of their lives of toil
Is freely pour'd into our wondering minds.
The poet speaks to us in words of fire,
And layeth bare his soul unto our gaze :
Blind Homer singeth unto us again,
Virgil descanteth on the “ country green,”
Horace delighteth with his classic odes,
And Ovid tells us love's delieious art.
Our own dear Shakspere lives with us again,
Unveiling all the seerets of the heart,
Talking of Nature as a well-known friend,
Whose every seeret unto him is known ;
Milton diseourseth of angelic deeds,
As one who all his days had dwelt with God,
And stray'd unquestion'd over heavenly paths.
The grave historian shews to us his page,
And serried armies pass before our eyes ;
We see again the mighty ones of old,

We look on Mede and Macedonian,
We see the Grecian and the Roman hosts,
And myriad Persians pass in proud array ;
We hear again the clangor of their arms,
Again we listen to their battle shouts,
And notes of martial music swelling round.
To him whose intellect is richly stor'd,
Whose mind is chasteñ'd by the lore of books,
How beautiful Creation's works appear !
How do they lift him upwards to his God,
That gracious God who is the source of all !
He readeth wisdom in the burning stars,
And in the leaf that trembles on the bough,
In lowly shrub and perfume-breathing flower.
Beauty appears in the still Summer-noon,
And in the lightning of the lurid sky ;
At morn, or eve, or noon, or blackest night,
His spirit worshipeth the God of all ;
Or should the scene be desolate and wild,
He walks companion'd by his own glad thoughts,
Which, as a cheering light, shine bright within,
And chase away the shadows of his lot.
Oh, unto God our thankful prayers should rise
That darkness hath departed from the land,

That books no more are pent in cloisters dim,
Or bound, like slaves, in iron manacles.*

See where yon antiquated building stands,
Its rocky base wash'd by the Irk's dark stream.
Many and strange vicissitudes of fate
Those time-worn walls have seen—the dwelling once
Of servants of the Lord—in stormy days
The home of Cromwell's stern and armed band,
A barracks and a prison!—Now it stands
A lasting monument of Chetham's fame,
Unto posterity a boon most rich—
A refuge for the child of poverty—
A still, secluded haunt for studious men—
The College of a merchant!—Pass the gate,
And cross the spacious yard, forgetting not
To gaze upon those boys in garments quaint,
Nor the old raven, which, in sober suit,
Wanders with careless steps beside your feet.

* When books were scarce, they were, of course, esteemed of great value. The bequest of one to a religious house entitled the donor to masses for his soul, and they were commonly chained to their station. As examples of the price of books, the *Roman de la Rose* was sold for above £30, and a Homily was exchanged for two hundred sheep and five quarters of wheat. Books, indeed, were usually disposed of for double or treble their weight in gold. As they generally belonged to the monasteries, reading was considered an act of religion.

The massive door upon its hinges swings,
And then the spacious kitchen meets your view,
And lofty room where youthful students dine ;
The stair-case next ascend, whose steps of stone
Bear on them impress of a host of feet
Which long ago have moulder'd into dust.
The boy who leads you on will then describe,
In style burlesque, but with a face most grave,
A motley group of strange and wondrous things,
Which oft have caus'd in rustic mind amaze.
Dismiss your guide, and gaze around the place,
And you will find a costly gathering there,
Cull'd from the master-minds of every age,
A very mine of rare and precious books,
In whose rich contents all may freely share.
Your favourite author choose, and bend your steps
To yonder old and noble reading-room,
Where all is hush'd and reverently calm,
The silence broken but by rustling leaves,
Whilst through the rich-stained glass of yon recess
The rays of colour'd light come streaming in,
And “ rose-bloom ” falleth on the student's page.*

* The College is situated between the Collegiate Church and the river Irk, on whose banks, near its confluence with the Irwell, the edifice is built. The College is supposed to be as old as the Collegiate Church. It was founded by the De la Warres, in the reign of Henry VI. It was the residence of the

Behold yon dark and ancient edifice, †
Yon venerable temple of the Lord,
Lifting to Heaven its time-worn gothic tower,
Even as it did in generations past.

warden and fellows of the church until after the death of Henry VIII., when it was sold to Edward, Earl of Derby, in the hands of whose descendants it remained until the civil war broke out, when it was seized on behalf of the parliament. It was used by the army as a barracks, and as a prison, and consequently became very much delapidated. About this time, Humphry Chetham, a merchant, residing at Turton Tower, near Bolton, and at Clayton Hall, conceived the idea of founding a Blue-coat hospital and library; and the College, to his views, appeared a most suitable building in which to establish his charities. He accordingly expressed, in his will, a desire that it should be purchased by his executors, which desire they were enabled to fulfil soon after the Restoration, when the building again became the property of the Derby family. The purchase was made of the celebrated Charlotte de la Tremouille, Countess of Derby, defender of Latham House. Eighty poor children are now educated and supported in the College.—*Manchester as it is.*

The existence in a town like Manchester of a library, containing upwards of *twenty-five thousand volumes*, to which the public have the privilege of *free access*, is a fact which, we have sometimes thought, ought from time to time, somewhat oftener at least than once in a generation, to be brought prominently under the notice of the community; that those who, from slender means, are unable sufficiently to gratify their love of reading—it may be, their thirst for knowledge—may become acquainted with this means of doing so, without cost to themselves. There are probably many strangers in Manchester, sojourners here awhile, as there are doubtless many new-comers now resident in the town, who may from these circumstances be unaware of the existence of this noble institution. That it is not more known may also be in some measure owing to its locality, in a part of the town, passed till of late years by no great thoroughfare, save during the races at Kersal Moor. The secluded position, too, of the college or hospital, standing in a large area, apart from any buildings, and not fronting any street, tends still more to keep one of its chief treasures, its library, from the practical view of the community. We say practical, because we are quite aware that the building is visited by groups of people, chiefly from the country, and on holiday

The Collegiate Church, Manchester.

How many eyes have look'd upon that pile,
That ne'er will look again in mortal life !
How many forms have pac'd its sacred aisles,
That now are lying 'neath its sculptur'd stones,
Sleeping unconscious of the many feet
That careless pace above their crumbling dust—
Perchance reposing in the very spot
O'er which themselves in life were wont to tread !
Oft have I gaz'd upon that structure old,
Whilst yet a boy, with most mysterious awe,
Wondering at all the many forms grotesque
That from its walls protrude in hideous guise,
Mocking the gazer with a strange grimace—
Glaring upon him with their fiendish eyes,
Or face disfigur'd by an impish glee.
I love the aged pile—its gloomy aisles,

occasions, who go there merely to see a few sharks' teeth, lizards, bows and arrows, &c., stuck against the walls, and of which they are furnished with an unconsciously ludicrous description, or naming, by one of the scholars of Chetham's Hospital, or free school, which is another portion of the same edifice. The probability is, that not one in a hundred of such visitors has the slightest idea that the vast number of books by which he sees himself surrounded, all carefully locked up in the cases, are accessible to him, or to any one; the only requirement and restriction being, that he shall enter his name in a book kept for the purpose, read the books in the library during the prescribed hours, and return each to the librarian before he quits the library. We have perhaps said enough to show that this library is not so well known, or at least made so extensively available, as it ought to be.—*Manchester Guardian.*

And noble choir with quaint devices deck'd,
The relics of a superstitious age ;
I love its old and monumental forms,
Its altar-pieee of glorious tapestry,
And windows rich with many splendid dyes ;
I love to hear its bells come pealing forth,
And sending to the breeze their music loud,
Like to the tones of some great instrument
Awoke to birth by giant's ponderous hand.
Within those walls the name I bear was given,
And there a richer, dearer boon I gain'd—
Wife of my bosom, there wert thou made mine !
Within that church's crowded burial-place
I would not that my last repose should be ;
Not where the stream of life for ever flows,
And careless feet pass o'er the field of death,
Would I that my long sleep should pass away :
I would be buried far away from towns,
Where trees might wave above my sleeping head,
And rippling waters run with murmurs near,
Whilst from the meadows came a balmy breath,
And birds with downy pinions and glad song.
I know 'tis but a wish which some may deem
Childish and weak, but I would have in death
The things around me which I love in life ;

And rural beauties--trees, and flowers, and birds--
These would I wish to have around my grave.
Rather than sleep where crowded cities are
Would I submit unto the ancient rite
Which gives the corse unto the funeral pile,
Leaving the scentless ashes for the urn.
And is it not a tender, beauteous thought,
To think that in the urn might treasur'd be
The ashes of the worship'd lov'd and dead,
Which ever would be present in our homes ?
To that most precious casket might we steal,
In the dim silence of the midnight hour,
And bathe the relic in our tears of love.
Well has one said who looks upon the world
With an observant, philosophic mind, *
That no home is so poor but it could have
Its little sanctuary, where might be placed
Those dear domestic monuments of love.
A mother's manes would with her children seem ;
The cherish'd image of a sainted wife,
Or husband most belov'd, might be evok'd
By those who lingered still behind to weep,
And souls of innocent and happy babes
Would seem to linger round their sculptur'd urns.

* J. A. St. John.

What a rich treasure would the ashes be,
Preserv'd in shining gold or marble pure,
Of Shakspere and of Milton, standing nigh
Our pillow'd heads at night ! And when the moon
Pour'd through our lattice white and dreamy rays,
Should we not feel that their illustrious shades,
Were hovering near us, to exalt our souls ?

The snow lies thick upon the frozen ground,
The moon is in the sky, and countless stars
Are scatter'd o'er the azure plain of Heaven,
And looking down like laughing maidens' eyes.
In such a night as this I love to stray,
Musing and lone, over the quiet earth,
Wending my way along the sheeted streets,
And passing by the many muffled forms,
Until I reach the broad and still highway,
Lin'd in the summer hours by pastures green,
With streamlets in the distance glittering,
Like coils of silver rope, among the grass ;
But now is all array'd in garb of white,
Stainless and pure as vestal vow'd to God.
In such a night as this again comes back
The feelings which of old were in my breast,
And I could almost dream myself a boy,

Youthful as when I rush'd in joy along,
To mingle in the winter's merry play,
Scarce leaving on the earth my footsteps' print.
The snow is hanging on the branches high,
And silver garlands deck the leafless hedge ;
The scatter'd dwellings scarcely now are seen,
The whitен'd cottage greeteth not my sight
As a distinctive feature in the scene,
And only by the glimmering taper's blaze
Can I discern where the white dwellings stand.
Nature now seems to lie all cold and dead,
Like a good man who slumbereth in the tomb,
But wakes again to beauty and delight.
Homeward I bend my steps, and seek my couch,
Thinking, whilst there I nestle snug and warm,
Of those who roam without a sheltering roof
'Neath which to rest their cold and wearied frames ;
And melancholy gathers round my heart,
When I reflect upon the various lots
Which men are doom'd to bear upon the earth.
Sleep falls upon my senses, and anon
The sound of music comes unto mine ears—
I start, and deem myself in fairy-land,
Listening to wild unearthly melody,
Which floats around in wild, though broken notes,

Now swept to distance by the passing breeze,
Then again coming with a louder swell,
Chasing away all dreamy phantasies
With the loud rudeness of unskilful tones.

Shivering I creep unto my window-pane,
And through the dim and frosted glass behold
Those wandering minstrels of the night, the Waits,
Waking night's echoes 'mid the chilling snow.

I well remember how I lov'd those sounds,
And joy'd to listen to them when a child,
Thinking I heard some blest and heavenly strain,
Proceeding from some far angelic choir ;

And still I love those notes of night to hear,
Rude though they be : I muse upon the time
When to the world its Saviour was born,
And to the shepherds came a heavenly host,

Whose hymn was “ Glory unto God most high,
And unto men peace and good will on earth.”

Who on their origin divine can muse,
And not within his mind feel holy thoughts,
Whene'er he hears the music of the Waits?*

* The waits of to-day are the remote and degenerate successors of those ancient bards who filled an important place in the establishments of princes and nobles,—as, also, of those wandering members of the fraternity, who, having no fixed position, carried their gift of music from place to place, as the tournament or the festival invited. Those of our readers who have much

The streets are all astir—the sky is bright,
But in the heavens appears nor moon nor star.
What means the ruddy light that glows around—
What mean those cries at this dead hour of night,
And sound of wheels, that clatter swiftly by ?
“ Fire !” is the answer—“ Fire !” the fearful cry !
The dreaded flames are raging wildly forth,
Like angry tigers that have burst their dens ;
And havoc and destruction mark their course.

acquaintance with the old chronicles have not to be told by us that these latter were frequently drawn together, in considerable numbers, by the Christmas celebrations. The name wait, or wayte, itself, is of great antiquity amongst us; and appears to have been the title given to some member of the band of minstrels, who either replaced the ancient minstrel-chronicler, in the royal establishments, or was, probably, under his direction;—the duty of which particular member it was to pass, at night, from door to door of the chambers, and pipe the watches, upon some particular species of instrument. As early as the reign of Edward III., we have mention of this individual minstrel by his title of wayte; and, in the subsequent ordinances for royal households, the name frequently occurs. Dr. Burney, in his “History of Music,” quotes from the “Liber Niger Domus Regis,” of Edward IVth’s time, a full description of the duties, privileges, and perquisites of this ancient officer. It is, probably, from this member of the royal household and his office, that the corporations for towns borrowed their earliest appointment of watchmen; and the ancestors of those ancient gentlemen, whose most sweet voices are amongst the lost sounds of the metropolis,—and whose mysterious cries will soon, we fear, be a dead language,—were, no doubt, in their original institution, minstrels or waits. The sworn waits are, we believe, still attached to many corporations, (although some of their duties have been alienated, and some of their prerogatives usurped)—and amongst others to that of the city of London. The bellman—and those “wandering voices,” the watchmen, where they still exist—have, however, a title to the same high and far descent; and have succeeded to most of the offices of the ancient waits. It would seem, too, that both these latter important personages have, at all times, had it in view to assert their claims to a

It is a high and many-storey'd pile,
Fill'd with commercial stores and precious bales,
But the dread element is everywhere,
Devouring rich and costly merchandize,
Quivering and leaping in fantastic shape,
And from each window thrusting out a tongue,
As if in mockery of the wreck it makes.

The beams fall crackling down—the work goes on—
The well-directed streams are waging war,
Mingling and hissing in the fiery strife ;
And long they hold contention hot and fierce
With the unsparing flames, that now appear
Like a wild horde of savage reckless men,
Without a leader, rushing madly on,
When comes a steady troop in fair array,

minstrel origin; their announcements being generally chanted in a species of music quite peculiar to themselves, and such as the world can never hope to hear again, when these gentry shall be extinct. "Oh! what a voice is silent!"—wrote Barry Cornwall, long before the introduction of the new police into our streets; and the passionate exclamation must surely have originated in a prophetic vision of the extinction of the Dogberry who piped the night-watches in Bedford Square. As for those wandering musicians who charm the long nights of the Christmas time, with *unofficial* music, and are waits by courtesy, they bear the same relation to the corporation minstrels of modern times, as did the travelling bards of former days to the ancient minstrels who were established in the households of nobles or of kings. The waits still, on some occasions, close their performance by calling the hour, and by certain other announcements, descriptive of the weather, or characteristic of the season.—*Book of Christmas, by T. K. Hervey.*

Before whose well-directed power they yield,
And fly ingloriously the field of strife :—
The flames are gone, and all again is calm.

Oh, stranger ! is thy mind oppress'd with care,
And doth the world weigh heavy on thy heart ?
Look'st thou upon the universal earth,
Finding no breast responsive to thine own ?
Come thou with me, and I will take thee where,
When pledg'd thy faith, thine eyes may look around,
And kindly welcomes sink into thy soul :
A band of brethren shall around thee throng,
And in their language thou wilt find a balm.
Health, happiness, shall be invok'd on thee ;
No more shalt thou, desponding, gaze around,
And find thyself a stranger 'mid the crowd—
A lonely man, where others congregate ;
A little word—a kindly signal given,
And thou a refuge from thy cares may'st find—
A temple no unhallow'd foot may tread,
A home of peace no chilling glance may blight,
A sanctuary no discord can approach.
No scornful gaze shall wither up thy soul,
No proud demeanour make thee shrink abash'd ;
But kindly tones shall answer to thine own—

Thy friends, thy equals, and thy brothers all !
Then change the scene :—if sickness visit thee,
And foul disease run riot through thy veins—
No kindred friends may hover round thy couch,
No mother's gentle eyes with tears look on,
No faithful partner sooth thy anguish'd heart,
And flit, with angel tread, past thy pale form ;
But, oh, in that dark hour of lone despair,
Call thou for aid—thy call shall be obey'd !
And kindly hands to thee shall minister
Comfort, in that thy dire extremity !
And smooth thy passage to the silent grave ;
Or snatch thee from the cold embrace of death,
And give thee unto light and life again !

Thou who hast wander'd through this devious lay,
Judge not my labours with an unkind heart,
Though I have written feebly and in vain,
And tir'd thee with my wild, discursive flights,
And melancholy musings on my fate ;
For sorrow oft hath weigh'd upon my soul,
And troubled thoughts have warr'd against my peace,
When I have sought the influence of the Muse.
Bear with me, then, and let us part in peace—

Be thine a happy and a prosperous lot !
For me, the future wears a face of smiles.
Oh, nought can ever rob me of bright hope,
Or dispossess my spirit of the love
Which I have ever cherish'd for my race—
Love unto man, and fervent trust in God !
My task is done—this rude and broken strain
Hath reach'd its close—I cast aside my pen !

END OF A VOICE FROM THE TOWN.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE POET'S HOME.

Partner belov'd, my true and constant wife,
Sick grows my heart, and tears o'ercharge mine eyes,
When I at times, amid my care-fraught life,
Reflect that thou dost share my toils and sighs ;
Yet thy dear presence doth them lighter make—
Would that my fate were happier, for thy sake.

Poets are dreamers, visionary men,
Whose fancies, flitting ever through the brain,
 Crowd, like wing'd bees with honey, to the pen—
 That fairy wand, 'mid hours of care and pain,
 Still conjures up unto the raptur'd view
 Seenes bright and glorious, everything but true.

Fantastic elves that haunt the poet's mind,
 When waves his feathery sceptre, haste away,
 And o'er the regions of the cloud and wind
 These revellers do hold despotic sway ;
 Creating domes and turrets, halls and towers,
 And silver founts, and rose-besprinkled bowers.

Ah ! would that I possess'd the earthly heaven
Those elves have oft brought to my yearning mind ;
Would that to me such home of bliss were given,
That I might leave the world of gain behind :
Turn thee, my love, and on the picture look,
Which I have sketch'd to place in Nature's book.

I would not have a proud and stately pile,
Rearing its walls of stone unto the skies ;
No pomp or state my dwelling should defile,
Humble alike in structure and in size ;
No burly menial should attend its door,
To shame his master, and affright the poor.

I'd have a cottage-home embower'd in trees,
Like modest merit ever in the shade ;
My minstrels blithe should be the birds and bees,
And 'gainst the wall the plant which doth not fade,
The loving ivy evermore should be—
Type of her love who ever clings to me.

Not distant far a tiny stream should stray,
Prattling like childhood 'mid the summer-hours,
Dancing in joy along its devious way,
And kissing banks bedeck'd with fragrant flowers ;
And in the night unto mine ear should creep
Its murmurs low, and lull to balmy sleep.

And thou, my boy, thy father's pride and care,
At morn should rush into the meadows gay,
Drinking the freshness of the taintless air,
And bounding on in wild and happy play,
Whilst I would follow thee with earnest gaze,
And smile to see thy careless, elfish ways.

Thy sisters, too, should fondly round me cling,
Buoyant and laughing, in the glow of health,
Singing by fits like merry birds of spring,
And gathering hoards of bright and scented wealth ;
With cheeks of bloom and joy-illumin'd eyes ;
Gemming their hair with many a perfum'd prize.

Stor'd should my garden be with choicest flowers,
Trees many-arm'd should branch above my head,
And I would wander, in the noon-tide hours,
Where leafy gloom upon my path was shed ;
A rustic chair should fill some quiet nook,
Where I might sit, companion'd by a book.

And I would have one spirit-haunted room,
Fill'd with the thoughts of great and glorious men,
Those godlike minds which have outliv'd the tomb,
And shine as stars above a gloomy fen,
Cheering our hearts with pure and holy light—
The beacon-fires by which we steer aright.

Dyed should its casement be with many a stain,
Limning the features of th' illustrious dead ;
And every sunbeam shining through the pane
Should shed its glory on a hallow'd head ;
So that I could not look upon the skies,
Unless I gaz'd through some immortal eyes.

Shakspere the fam'd and mighty king of thought ;
The heaven-seeing Milton, though to earth all blind ;
Byron, who held both earth and heaven as nought—
A comet rushing through the realms of mind ;
Spiritual Shelly, lofty-soul'd, though meek ;
And sweet-voic'd Keats, with pale consumptive cheek ;
Wordsworth the worshipp'd, with his verse divine,
And Barry Cornwall, prince of English song,
Coleridge the dreamy, with his nervous line ;
And luscious Moore, with thoughts in dazzling throng ;
Leigh Hunt, the pleasant, gossiping away ;
And Southey's patriot strain of youthful day.

Quaint, quiet Lamb should chat in humourous mood ;
And Hazlitt's critic fire about should play ;
Pale, pensive, pleasant, punning poet Hood,
With far-fetch'd fancies, gloom should chase away ;
Bulwer and Scott my spirit should enchain,
And Campbell charm me with his classic vein.

Homer and Virgil, Greek and Roman sage,
The learn'd and wise of every age and clime ;
They who have stamp'd their counsels on a page
Which hath outliv'd the mouldering touch of Time ;
They, though of ancient days, for ever young--
I'd have them all, the great of every tongue.

Vain is the wish—th' illusion will not stay—
I gaze no more with fancy-cheated eyes ;
I see around a traffic-trodden way,
And the dull smoke bedims the beauteous skies ;
Dark, dusty mansions once again I meet,
And hear the tumults of the crowded street.

I feel that I am prison'd up and pent,
By the stern barriers of an adverse fate ;
Yet even now my prayers to heaven are sent
For all the blessings of my humble state ;
Clean is my hearth, my fire is red and bright—
My children's eyes reflect its cheerful light.

My babes of love, my treasur'd little brood,
I thank my God that you have never known
What 'twas to want a meal of homely food,
That hunger ne'er hath worn you to the bone ;
When to your warm and pleasant couch you creep,
Glad are the visions of your sinless sleep.

Wife of my soul, why should I now repine ?

Oh, am I not in thine affection blest ?

Thy dear eyes ever kindly answer mine—

Come then, Content, and be our cherish'd guest ;
And thou, my spirit, strive the goal to gain,
Where joy's pure sky shall ever bright remain.

AN ADDRESS,

WRITTEN ON THE OCCASION OF AN AMATEUR PERFORMANCE FOR THE BENEFIT
OF THE LANCASHIRE COMMERCIAL CLERKS' SOCIETY,

At the Theatre Royal, Manchester, on Wednesday evening, February 17th, 1841.

To-night no veterans, skilful in the art
Which sways the passions and beguiles the heart,—
No practised stagers for applause will sue ;—
Indulgence then at least must be their due.
If “faultless monster” e'er were seen on earth,
Ne'er did perfection start *at once* to birth.
As a bright star which the dim mist doth shroud,
Too oft is merit veiled by modest cloud.
Those who are shrinking now with timid fear,
Seek not Fame's crown upon their brows to wear ;
To-night alone as scenic heroes known,—
To-morrow, Commerce claims them for its own ;
And they, perchance, may smile in riper age,
To think that once they trod life's mimic stage.
If then your plaudits should not be their meed,
Forgive their errors for the *CAUSE* they plead ;
The objects of that cause 'tis but to name,
Your best and dearest sympathies to claim,—

To light with joy the mansions of distress,
To glad the widow and the fatherless ;
To smooth for age the passage to the grave,
To cheer in sickness, and from want to save.
Cramped are the energies of those who seek
To dry the tear upon the orphan's cheek ;
Unnerved the hands that fain would solace shed
On her who mourneth for a loved one dead.
Many on whom, in pride of strength and health,
The world hath showered its fleeting store of wealth,—
Who deemed that fortune ne'er on them would frown,
Are now in helpless poverty struck down.
Vain their complaints, vainly for aid they cry,
Exhausted coffers yield them no supply ;—
But now at length is seen a cheering ray,
Be it the dawn which heralds in a day
Of sunny hours, when forth in joy there streams
A dazzling treasure of rich golden beams.
Yours is the power, ye wealthy, generous band,
Whose bounties oft rain gladness on the land,
To cherish still, and make with them abide,
BENEVOLENCE, WITH PRUDENCE FOR ITS GUIDE.*

* The Motto of the Commercial Clerks' Society.

THE PRINCESS AND THE POET.*

'Twas in a proud and lofty palace-hall,
Long the abiding-place of queens and kings,
That a fam'd minstrel sat in drowsy thrall,
With senses clos'd against all outward things,
Whilst far abroad, on fancy's truant wings,
His thoughts were wandering in dreamy play,
Gathering the images of beauteous things,
Which pass'd before his mind in bright array,
Swift as the fleecy clouds by wild breeze swept away.

* The earliest French writer of any consequence in the fifteenth century, was Alain Chartier, who did much to purify his native language. He was secretary of the household to Charles VI. and Charles VII. He wrote some historical works, but his natural tendencies were towards poetry and imaginative writing, and he was celebrated for a chaste and elegant style of discourse. Margaret of Scotland, first wife to the Eleventh Louis, seeing Alain asleep on a chair one day, as she traversed the halls of the palace, went up and kissed him, before all her attendants. When surprise was expressed by them that she should thus salute a man remarkable for the plainness of his looks, "I do not kiss the man," replied she, "but the mouth which has given utterance to so many charming things."

He gaz'd no more upon a kingly pile,
No more he thought of splendour and of state,
No more he strove to solve each courtly wile,
The royal beck no longer did he wait,
Chill'd with a frown, or with a smile elate ;
He mix'd with page and carpet-knight no more,
Chang'd was his dress, and alter'd was his fate,
And in his hand a shepherd's crook he bore—
Green were the fertile plains—'twas an Arcadian shore.

A river glided by, each silvery wave
Murmuring as though, with sweet and syren tongue,
It call'd upon him in the depths to lave,
Whilst roam'd his flocks the emerald banks along ;
And ever and anon a maiden's song
Was borne upon the pure and scented air,
Full of the joy which floweth from the young,
Ere their glad hearts have felt the touch of care,
Or they have borne the grief which riper years must bear.

He breath'd into his pipe with simple skill,
And music's notes awoke beneath his sway ;
He paus'd, and all was for a moment still,
And then his strain was answered by a lay,

So sweet, so dear, his soul dissolv'd away
In an enchanted trance of deep delight,
And, blushing like the dawn of budding May,
A gentle creature charm'd his ravish'd sight,
Pure as a cloudless sky, and as an angel bright.

Now let us leave the poet's vision'd land,
And turn again unto that palace fair,
Where still he sleeps, cheek pillow'd on his hand,
Spell-bound reclining in an antique chair :
With stately tread and jewel-sprinkled hair,
And eyes whose rays the owner's gems eclipse,
A lady comes, whose lovely features wear
A sunny smile, as onward now she trips,
Showing the pearl that hides within her ruby lips.

Like stars that cluster round the queen of night,
Maidens high-born her graceful steps attend,
And as she gazes on the dreaming wight,
Their wondering eyes they all upon her bend ;
They see her proud and royal head descend,
They mark her kiss that homely thought-worn face,
And with each other whispering words they blend,
While she rebukes them with a mien of grace,
And thus their curious wonderment seeks to efface :

“ Hold me not lightly, gentle dames of France,
That yon unconscious lips I’ve deign’d to press,
Nor on me bend your fix’d and wondering glance—
The poet, not the man, did I caress;
Think not his features I revere the less
Because no beauty in their shape you see;
Those lips have utter’d words that burn and bless—
The mind is ever beautiful to me,
And they whose thoughts are pure can ne’er unlovely be.”

Meantime the poet, in his happy dream,
Discours’d of love by the lone river’s brink,
And joy’d to bask in the bewitching beam
Of the dear eyes whose light ’twas heaven to drink ;
They talk’d till stars above began to wink,
And day sunk down in ebon night’s abyss—
Oh, human joy, how soon is snapp’d thy link !
One last embrace, one tender parting kiss—
The minstrel woke and mus’d—it was a dream of bliss.

SLEEPLESS FANCIES.

I hear no sound—mine eyes are veil'd by night,
And yet I lie upon a sleepless bed,
Tossing with wearied frame and aching head,
Longing to gaze upon the dawn of light.
The stream-like hours seem frozen in their flight,
Whilst, like swift meteors, thoughts athwart my brain
Follow each other in a chase most vain ;
And now I start and shudder in affright,
Pois'd on the edge of cavern deep and dim.
Now wild-flowers bloom, and waters kiss my feet,
But when my lips the cooling wave would greet
Gone is the brook, and flowerless is its brim :
Grant me, oh, God ! sweet sleep and happy dreams,
Or let me look upon the morning's beams.

THE TROUBADOUR.

Visions are floating past mine eyes
Of sunny days and moonlit skies,
Of abbeys dark and cloisters dim,
Of monks and vestal-chanted hymn,
Of burnished mail of gallant knight,
And waving scarf of lady bright ;
But, oh, midst every dream I see,
Thy form is present still to me.
Never did village maid more fair,
With blushing cheek and flower-wreath'd hair,
Walk forth bedeck'd with ribbons gay,
Upon the merry first of May ;
Never was dame more beauteous woo'd
Beneath Italia's starry skies,
When noble youth in love-sick mood,
Pour'd in her ear impassioned sighs ;
Never, for fairer lady's sake,
Did music's gentle tones awake
Upon the moon-besilver'd lake,

Where bark of gallant cavalier
Was row'd by trusty gondolier.

Oh, had I been a shaven monk,
And thou a meek and holy nun,
If once mine ear thy voice had drunk,
My thoughts of heaven had all been gone ;
And I had breath'd not hymn or prayer,
Whilst musing on thy features fair ;
As the light down on breezes flies,
My thoughts would all have past in sighs,
Drawn from me by thy lips and eyes.
Oh, had I been a knight of old,
I would have barter'd grounds for gold,
And leagu'd me with some valiant band,
And prais'd thy charms in every land,
And in the tourney's daring strife
Have risk'd for thee my fame and life.
If thou wilt listen for awhile,
And pay me, dear one, with a smile,
I'll tell a simple tale to thee
Of the days of song and chivalry :—
'Twas at the time when mailed men
Went forth to the holy fight,
When, streaming out from many a glen,
Flash'd arms and armour bright,

That there dwelt amid England's courtly flower,
An honour'd and gentle Troubadour,
 And Rudel was his name ;
And many a lady proud and bright
Upon him bent her eyes of light,
 Yet he turn'd from each fair dame,
For his heart was over the broad blue sea,
With the lovely Countess of Tripoli ;
But though he had heard of her charity,
And her beauty and grace continually,
He never had chane'd the lady to see.

Her praise was sung in full many a strain,
By minstrel and knight and page,
 Who had wander'd o'er Asia's burning plain,
In their sacred pilgrimage.

They told how, when wounded and nigh to fail,
In their hour of dark despair,

 When their lips were parch'd and their checks were pale
They had gaz'd on an angel fair,
Who had hover'd about their couch of pain,
 And whose fostering care like the blessed rain,
When it waters the earth with cooling showers,
 Reviving the drooping herbs and flowers,
Restor'd them to health and strength again ;

And how this angel so lovely to see,
Was the beauteous Countess of Tripoli,
And blessings they breath'd on her treasur'd name,
And spread through Christendom her fame.

Now Rudel, the gentle Troubadour,
For his unknown love he sighs,
And vows he will leave fair England's shore
To dwell beneath sunnier skies ;
For he seem'd as though bound by a mystic spell
To the lady he knew not, but lov'd so well.

So he sail'd o'er the booming and bounding main,
With a sick and a pining soul ;

But he felt that the hope of his heart was vain,
That he ne'er should reach the goal,—
That he went like a wounded bird to its nest,
With an arrow transfix'd in its bleeding breast.

As the fabled swan, which in singing dies,
He warbled, with falt'ring tone,
Of his love and his soul's deep ecstacies,
Till his song grew a dying moan.

The Countess was told the piteous tale
That a minstrel had cross'd the wave,
That the breeze which had filled his vessel's sail
Had but wafted him on to a grave ;

That he had come from the English isle,
To bask in her beauty and win her smile ;
And it caused her inmost soul to stir
When they told that he died for the love of her.
She hasted away to that dying man,
And she gaz'd on his wasted features wan ;
Then she knelt by the poet's side to pray,
And press'd his lips that were cold as clay,
And his hand she clasp'd, and bid him wake
To life, and live but for her sake.
Scarce could the dying bard express
His gratitude, and love's excess,
But she heard 'mid the racking pangs of death
That he spoke of her with his latest breath.
One last long look on those fatal charms,
And he died in that weeping lady's arms.
Bitter and many the tears she shed
O'er the noble form that there lay dead ;
No voice to her spirit could comfort give,
And a life of penance she vow'd to live.
Transcribed in letters of shining gold,
Was Rudel's latest lay,
And the scroll to her heart did the lady fold
Unto her dying day.

Inclos'd was his body in porphyry,
Inscrib'd with his soul's idolatry,
And the fame he had won in minstrelsy.

Thou smilest not, my love, on me,
Quick throbs thy heart with sympathy,
And in thine eye so dark and clear
Stands, trembling, tender Pity's tear :
Weep not, for many years have fled
Since those two forms were with the dead ;
But had it been thy fate to be
The Countess fair of Tripoli,
Methinks I could have cross'd the sea,
And deem'd it bliss to die for thee.

THE FESTIVAL OF CHARITY.*

Whilst every brow with joy's bright wreath is bound,
Whilst maiden roses blush and bloom around,
And gentle tones and lovely eyes entrance,
Making the scene a garden of romance ;
Whilst on the air sweet notes of music stream,
And starry lights in radiance o'er you gleam ;
Whilst pleasure holds your souls in blissful thrall,
Turn ye a moment from this festival :
Think not that I your gladness would alloy—
By contrast only do we life enjoy—
The clouds that float between us and the sky
Make it more welcome to the gazing eye.
Think ye of those whose fate 'tis yours to cheer,
And light with transient joy their dark career ;
Think of the poor who, in their dwellings lone,
Are breathing forth the sad and bitter moan,

* Written on the occasion of a Ball, under the patronage of the Officers of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the proceeds of which were distributed among the poor.

Whilst by their hearths their shivering children cry,
With grief-worn cheek, and hunger-haunted eye ;
Look on the father, spirit-crushed and weak,
Who long for toil has found it vain to seek ;
Gone is his strength of limb and buoyant tread,
And even Hope flies at the cry for bread,
Whilst the tried partner of his love and care
Upon him bends a look of mute despair ;
Think on the scanty fed and lightly clad—
Pause for a moment—and again be glad,
For all assembled here this happy night,
Have at our call bestow'd their willing mite ;
Yes, all I see around have done their part
To soothe the wretched and the aching heart ;
All, all have aided in the work divine,
And laid their cheerful offerings on our shrine ;
Let pleasure reign, let mirth and joy be free—
This is the feast of God-like charity.

To you, ye brethren of a sacred band,
Whose deeds bear witness for you o'er the land ;
Ye, who go forth the widow's home to bless,
Ye, who are fathers to the fatherless,
Ye, who march onward in benign crusade,
And the pale realms of woe and want invade,

Waging with poverty untiring war,
Benevolence your ever-guiding star,
Whilst a proud banner floats your ranks above,
Bearing your watchwords—"Friendship, Truth, and Love;"
To you, our brothers, vain were words of mine,
Each soul of yours doth Charity enshrine ;
And oh ! did men but read your acts aright,
Upon their minds at once would burst a light
Showing the path to harmony and peace ;
Then would dark scenes of war and discord cease,
The earth would all be an Elysian plain,
Its sons a brotherhood without a Cain.

Even as this festal-hall of bliss and light,
May all your after-hours be glad and bright ;
May joy dwell ever with you—may content
Be with each thought and every feeling blent ;
May plenty shower its bounties on each head,
And peace and hope on all their halo shied.
My task is done—I may not longer dwell—
My heart, dear friends, goes with the word—farewell !

THE LOVER'S LAY.

Around the flowers the night-winds sigh,
The bright dew gems the roses ;
Each bud that loves the day-star's eye,
With folded leaf reposes ;
The moon is imag'd on the lake,
The stars around her wreathing ;
Then wake, my lady-love, awake,
And list the lay I'm breathing.

The silver waters of the stream
Are kiss'd by drooping willow—
Oh ! that a kiss might break thy dream,
And call thee from thy pillow !
Darkness is in thy father's hall,
Thy sire has long been sleeping,
And drowsy silence broods o'er all,
Save me, my lone watch keeping.

Lady fair, do I watch in vain
To meet thine eyes' bright beaming?
The moon shines through thy lattice-pane,
Yet not on thee 'tis streaming:
Away with doubt! I see thee now,
With thy golden tresses flowing—
Thy lovely cheek and dazzling brow,
Like a crimson rose-bud glowing.

A FATHER'S PRAYER.

WRITTEN ON THE MORNING OF THE BIRTH OF MY YOUNGEST CHILD.

A child is born!—another claims my care,
And comes my sorrows and my joys to share;
Though with the world I wage unequal strife,
Yet do I welcome this new heir of life—
I welcome and I bless the little form,
Which lies enfolded in embracing warm,
Even as an unfledged bird in downy nest,
Clasp'd to that fount of love, a mother's breast,
Sleeping in sweet unconsciousness of all
The toil, the sin, the suffering, and the thrall,
Which may its lot beset in coming years,
And cause a bitter smile at childhood's tears,
Making the griefs of infant days to seem
As summer-clouds, or sorrows of a dream.
My heart grows faint—I sit and muse alone,
And inly ponder on its fate unknown :

Oh, will it be a flower of lasting bloom,
Or, sickening, sink unscath'd into the tomb ?
Will fortune's beams upon its pathway shine,
Or will its lot be clouded o'er as mine ?
Will it e'er win a bright unsullied fame,
Or fade and die, nor leave behind a name ?—
Idly I seek to rend the veil away
Which Heaven doth wisely o'er the future lay ;
Yet spare me, God, to guard its helpless youth,
And point the road to virtue and to truth ;
Teach me to make it not unworthy thee,
And keep its mind from all defilements free ;
Make this weak babe thine own especial care—
I humbly ask—it is a Father's Prayer.

THE MAIDEN'S GRAVE.*

Over the waste of dim departed years,
As a lost wanderer, memory tracks its way,
And, like pale spectres, vanish'd hopes and fears
Before my vision flit in strange array ;
Dead faces rise from out the clammy earth,
I meet the glancing of their glittering eyes,
And my heart boundeth with its old delight
To hear the tones of mirth,
Breath'd by the lips that never uttered sighs,
Springing from hearts that never felt a blight.

* In Middleton Churchyard is a grave planted round with willows and flowers, but without a stone or inscription. This is the grave of Ann Bamford, the only child of Samuel Bamford, the poet, who was devotedly attached to her. When a mere child I passed some days at a farm house, where she also was staying ; her father being then in prison on political grounds. A childish friendship was formed, which, though we never met again, has always had an abiding place in my memory. I have now the happiness of calling her father my friend ; and, in the summer of 1841, I stood with him, for the first time, beside his daughter's grave, together with Mr. J. C. Prince and two other literary friends. We were all struck with the beautiful and poetic feeling which had led to the decoration of the grave. Mr. Prince and myself each agreed to write some verses on the subject, and his have already appeared in print ; but I believe, that no similarity will be found between them and my own. "I have planted," said Mr. Bamford, "no garden flowers about her grave. I thought that wild ones would be more characteristic of a simple peasant girl."

The misty crowd hath faded, and I stray
A happy boy that hath not told a teen,
A little maid companion of my play,
Through hedge-lined lanes, and over meadows green :
Summer is smiling o'er the fertile land ;
Birds, like our thoughts, soar with a heavenward wing ;
And in our hearts joy holds its festival,
As, wandering hand in hand,
We pluck wild flowers, or drink from sparkling spring—
It seems as though earth's pleasures could not pall.

The little maiden is a treasured child,
The only daughter of a poet's home,
One who had oft been by high thoughts beguiled,
In search of truth and liberty to roam ;
One who now languish'd in a dungeon cell,
Though nought his aspirations proud could tame,
Or quench the fire that in his bosom burn'd :
Oh, what can break the spell
Which binds the soul where lives the germ of fame ?—
By death alone the eagle's course is turned.

Nature hath donn'd her richest summer dress,
As a young virgin gaily deck'd to meet

One who rejoiceth in her loveliness ;
The trees are throng'd with leaves ; the breeze is sweet,
Laden with odours from a thousand flowers ;
Insects with rainbow wings are fluttering by,
And song of reaper comes upon the ear ;
We rest in shadowy bowers,
For not a cloud o'erveils the sunny sky ;
All, all is joy and hope—we know not woe or fear.

The scene is changed—my brow is touch'd by care,
The glow of youth no more is on my cheek,
And troubled years have thinn'd my flowing hair,
Whilst my heart swells with thoughts I cannot speak.
Summer is smiling o'er the land again,
And flowers are scattering incense on the earth,
And graceful trees their leaves above me wave :
I tread no grassy plain,
And no glad fancies in my mind have birth—
Flowers are below, but flowers that deck a grave.

It is an old churchyard, a rustic spot,
Where all around repose the lowly dead,
And stony chronicles point out each lot,
With record worn by many a passing tread ;

But here lies one without a line-carved stone
To speak her virtues, or to simply tell
When pass'd away her innocent young breath ;
Yet many an anguish'd moan
Was breath'd by those who knew her worth too well,
Whose dearest hopes were blighted by her death.

Flowers bloom around, the flowers in life she loved,
The truest emblems of a simple maid,
Whose breast was ne'er by thoughts unholy moved,
Whose tongue was ne'er to evil words betray'd,
Who was herself of one dear home the flower,
The gentle tendril of her mother's heart,—
The rose whose perfume filled her father's soul
With fragrance which no power,
Save that of death, could ever make depart ;
And he with flowers had deck'd her earthly goal.

Here the meek maiden of the chilly year,
The silver snow-drop, peeps from snowy bed,
Whilst, by its side, the pearly buds appear
Of the bright crocus with its golden head ;
Here the fair primrose sheds its rays around,
And violets woo the kisses of the sun,

And lowly daisies from their coverts peep ;
Forget-me-nots abound—
Like tones from voices of the loved and gone—
And the white clover round about doth creep.

The rose unfolds its leaves of beauty rare,
Looking at morn like village-maid in tears ;
The hyacinth swings its bells upon the air,
Their music heard, perchance, by angel ears ;
The amaranthus showeth its white cell,
With a faint tinge, like blush of modest cheek ;
There may you find the sweet-breathed mignonette,
And scarlet pimpernel,
Which shelter from the coming storm will seek,
And close its blossoms e'er its leaves be wet.

There standeth by my side the sorrowing sire,
The gifted father of a gentle child ;
One who hath felt the true poetic fire,
And wander'd musing over heath and wild ;
One who hath breathed the patriotic lay,
And guiltless suffered in a dungeon dim ;
One who hath striven for liberty and right,
And lived to see the day
When he to freedom might outpour the hymn,
And fearless mingle in the bloodless fight.

No tear is flowing from that father's eye,
No sorrow utters he in wailings weak ;
But there is grief which has not tear nor sigh,
And there is woe which doth no language seek :
Most tenderly that humble grave he tends,
And watcheth it throughout the varying year,
And carefully each weed doth he remove ;
There childhood never wends
To pluck the flowers, but with a holy fear,
And reverent thoughts, is shunn'd the grave of love.

And we who wander'd in our infant years,
Gathering bright blossoms, drinking from the well,
Death leaves one yet to tread the vale of tears,
The other in her youth and beauty fell :
I still live on—thy kindred mourn thee dead,
My heart still broods o'er sorrows of its own ;
The very flowers thy childhood prized now wave
O'er thy unconscious head—
The thorns of life have in my path been thrown,
And now I stand and muse upon thy grave.

ENGLAND AND CAMBRIA.

RECITED AT THE MANCHESTER CAMBRIAN INSTITUTION DINNER, IN
CELEBRATION OF ST. DAVID'S DAY, MARCH 1ST, 1841.

The Institution had in view the raising of a fund to establish Schools, where poor Welsh children might be instructed in the English language.

How chang'd is all since that rude time
When dwelt in Britain's wave-girt clime
A brave, but wild and savage race,
Whose sole delights were war and chace !
Then from the Druid's sacrifice
Did foul, unhallow'd smoke arise ;
Science diffus'd around no light,
The mind was dark as rayless night ;
And few the comforts that were spread
About the Briton's straw roof'd shed.
The Roman war-cry 'mid them broke,
The conqueror came with tyrant yoke ;

Then came a host of Saxon foes—
The Norman's shout of battle rose :
Long did oppress'd and suffering men
Defend each hill, and plain, and glen ;
Long did a true and patriot band
Fight for their lov'd, their native land.
They could not conquer, would not yield,
But, life and liberty to shield,
The remnant of the British race
Sought 'mid their hills a dwelling-place :
They found, where Snowdon's heights arose,
A refuge from their country's foes—
Yes, Cambria ! it was for thee
To be the home of Liberty ;
'Till Edward, England's cruel king,
Did ruin and destruction bring.
Then, Liberty, was rung thy knell,
Then proud and brave Llewellyn fell ;—
Oh, may disgrace and lasting shame
Be on that dastard tyrant's name,
Who doom'd unto a bloody death
The Bards, whose music was the breath
Which rais'd the flame of victory,
And told of deeds which should not die.

Away with mournful thoughts, away !
For joy must claim our hearts to-day ;
Thy saint, oh, Cambria ! will bless
This scene of mirth and happiness ;
And England's champion, too, will smile
Upon the children of his isle.
Discord and doubt have left the land,
Each greeteth each with friendly hand ;
And he that springs from Saxon line,
Pledges the Cymro in his wine ;
And he whose veins have Norman blood,
Feels all its ancient hate subdued :
Warm wishes, friendly hopes shall be
The stars of our festivity.

Cambria ! thy children yet shall find
That England chains not limb nor mind ;
Learning shall now unlock its store,
To gladden and instruct thy poor ;
And soon shall structures round us throng,
Where they may learn our lore and tongue.
Then will the slanderous stain depart,
That Commerce closeth hand and heart ;
The rich will not deny their gold,
Knowledge will open wide its fold ;

Cambria's sons and daughters there
Shall banquet then on Wisdom's fare ;
And Education's breeze and light
Refresh the mind and bless the sight ;
Whilst prayers of gratitude arise,
And cleave their way above the skies :
Alike shall mental culture grace
The ancient and the modern race.

SONNET TO T. A. TIDMARSH, ESQ.

Though fortune hath not smil'd upon my lot,
And bless'd my state with bounteous stores of wealth,
Still sorrows needless I will harbour not,
But thank my God that I have mind and health ;
I thank Him, too, that I can look around,
Nor feel myself unfriended on the earth,
For many ties about my heart are wound,
Full many joys within my soul have birth ;
And not the least the emotion which I feel
For thee, who oft in sorrow's darken'd hour
Did'st friendship's saered influence reveal,
And in mine ear thy soothing counsels pour ;
Nor gav'st thou words alone in hour of need,—
Thou wert alike in language and in deed.

SONG.

As the fragrant wind that floateth
'Mid the summer-hours,
Stealing odours, while it giveth
Sweets to leaves and flowers—
Thus thy beauty haunts my spirit,
Fraught with bliss to me,
Though it from my bosom beareth
All my heart to thee.

As the mystic sea-shell ever
Murmurs to the ear,—
As the stars above us never
Quit their glorious sphere,—
So in absenee does my memory
Bear thine image still;
So thou seemest ever near me,
Spite of thought or will.

If in sleep appear an angel,
It doth wear thy face ;
When it fadeth with the vision,
Thou hast ta'en its place.
I see thee in the crowded city,
And in wand'rings lone :
Thus in absence, sleep, or waking,
I am all thine own.

THE BROKEN SPELL.

I love thee not as once I lov'd, and yet I know not why ;
It is not that the gladsome light hath vanish'd from thine eye ;
It is not that the rose-like tint hath faded from thy cheek,
But the spell which bound my heart of old, it is in vain to seek.

The same pale ringlets cluster round thy spotless neck and brow,
And the form on which I've gaz'd so oft, hath grace and
lightness now ;
There is the same sweet eloquence blent with thy voice's tone,
But the nameless spell that won my soul, hath from thy
beauty gone.

There was a time when dreams of bliss my spirit would
entrance,
Whene'er I caught the brightness of thy sweet and loving
glance ;
And when I met thee, hope and joy lit up my brow and heart,
And sadness was upon my soul when came the time to part.

Now I can gaze, unmov'd, upon thine eye's enchanting beam ;
It causeth not within my heart a single blissful dream ;
Upon my breast a chilling cloud for ever seems to lie—
I meet thee without transport, and I leave thee without sigh.

Thou seest change is with my soul, yet changest not in thine ;
Around me still, as they were wont, thy snowy arms entwine ;
In vain—as once it was, my love can never be for thee—
Thou art but verdure clinging round a dark and blasted tree.

Nay, tell me not of plighted vows—alas, it is in vain—
If worlds were mine, as then I lov'd, I could not love again ;
My passion was too wild and strong, it burn'd too bright
to last—

It was but as the lightning's flash—it shone, and it hath past.

Oh ! would that I had known thee not, or thou hadst lov'd
me less !

But it hath ever been my fate to curse where I should bless :
Adieu !—the world will brand my name—it recks not of my
heart—

I lov'd thee once, I love not now—'tis meet that we should part.

THE MINSTREL'S LOT.

What is the Minstrel's lot upon the earth ?
It is to nourish unsubstantial dreams ;
It is to feel within his soul the birth
 Of lofty thoughts, and heaven-created gleams ;
It is to feel of sympathy the dearth,
 And seek companions in the woods and streams ;
'Tis to endure the worldling's bitter spurns,
 And bear the fire that in his bosom burns.

The Minstrel mingles with the busy throng,
 Yet knows himself no kin unto the men
Who pass with haste and eare-worn brows along,
 And spend their days in money-getting den,
Scorning alike the poet and his song—
 They cannot feel the magic of his pen,
The thirst for wealth hath wither'd up their veins—
 They toil, and grasp, and—die amid their gains.

What though the Minstrel hath no lordly hall,
What though he boast not of his gardens fair,
And mingleth not in courtly festival,
Nor banqueteth on viands rich and rare—
The encircling sky to him seems palace-wall,
The fields a garden free and fresh as air ;
With thankful heart he eats his homely meal,
And feels sweet thoughts like incense round him steal.

When by his glimmering lamp in lonely room,
He holds commune with the undying dead,
Gone like a shadow is each thought of gloom,
And all the cares that gird his fate seem fled ;
Bright flowers of intellect around him bloom,
The light of mind is o'er his chamber shed ;
Shapes fancy-born spring up before his eyes,
And bath'd in bliss his tranquil spirit lies.

Then to him comes the poet's golden hour,
When all his soul runs riot through his veins ;
Rich thoughts drop from him as a summer-shower,
His spirit pants as though 'twould burst its chains,
He feels that his is an immortal dower,
And soareth far above this world of pains,
Treading with fearless steps amid the skies,
And drinking in the light of angel-eyes.

He roameth forth at breath of early morn,
When the lark singeth in the sun-rays bright,
And silver crystals, hanging on the thorn,
Seem priceless jewels to his raptur'd sight ;
By him the breeze with odours sweet is borne,
Like Nature sighing in her own delight :
The sky above, the lake below him clear—
All make to him both earth and heaven more dear.

The lowliest flower that smiles upon the ground,
The tiniest insect fluttering on the wing—
He findeth pleasure in each sight and sound,
He seeth beauty in the homeliest thing ;
He knoweth God is watching all around,
And his heart swells with silent worshipping :
No blossom will he pluck, but onwards pass,
Nor harm the daisy peeping from the grass.

He seeks again the ever-trodden street,
And marks the earthly pass him heedless by—
Well-garb'd and proud, they will not deign to greet
The humble bard with recognizing eye :
With glance awry, and quicker-hurrying feet,
Eager again to Mammon's haunts they fly,
As though they thought their heaps of glittering gold
Would buy an entrance to the heavenly fold.

The poet dies, the rich man fades away—
The one reposes in a lowly bed—
Above the other's undeserving clay
A stately cenotaph erects its head,
And lines of virtue, penn'd for hireling's pay,
Upon the costly monument are read :
The gazer marks the cold unblushing stone,
Wondering such deeds were all before unknown.

Why do the strangers mark that humble spot ?
Why on that grave their reverent glances bend ?
He who sleeps there in life was honour'd not,
And unto him did wealth no influence lend ;
His was a friendless and unpitied lot--
No mourning crowds did at his couch attend ;
Say, why are men with pilgrim-homage there,
Deigning no look on marble scutcheons fair ?

Such is the Minstrel's fate—in life unknown,
Unpitied and uncar'd for by the crowd ;
When from the earth the soul of song hath flown,
The nation's voice is rais'd in accents loud,
And myriads flock to gaze upon the stone
Which covers only coffin, clay, and shroud :
E'en be it so—so let the Minstrel fall—
An age of fame is earn'd by life of thrall.

LOVE RHYMES.

I need not say I think of thee
In sorrow and in care ;
I need not say thou art to me
More dear than light or air ;
As yields the rose unto the bee,
So thou each thought dost share.

Thou art the music of my life,
Thou art my desert-stream,
My garden with sweet blossoms rife,
Thou art a quenchless beam,
Shining upon my lot of strife—
A haunting, glorious dream.

Even as a dark and orbless night
Were I from thee apart ;

As ship without a beacon-light,
When rocks around it start ;
As breaking of the morning bright
Thy smile illumes my heart.

Up doth the soaring sky-lark spring
And singeth as he flies ;
I cannot mount on rapturous wing,
And cleave poetic skies,
For ever when of thee I sing,
My song in murmurs dies.

If thou within the grave wert laid,
No tears would flow from me,
That fountain of relief were staid,
Dried would its sources be ;
The sunlight from my sight would fade,
Thy shadow should I see.

Without thee I should wander on
With sightless mind and eye,
Or be as bird whose voice hath gone,
Or flowers that scentless lie :
Beloved, we in life are one,
Together let us die.

MAY.

Beautiful May! thou comest once again,
Clad in thy vest of green, and deck'd with flowers,
Smiling and sunny as a happy child,
And full of joy as maiden of sweet thoughts.
The sky hath long been overcast with clouds,
And plashing rains and cold ungracious winds
Have damp'd our joys, and filled our hearts with gloom ;
But now the breeze goes dancing o'er the earth ;
The monarch sun sits proudly on his throne,
And throws his beams in liberal largesse round ;
The buds shine brightly in the thick green grass,
And birds rush singing through the perfum'd air ;
The fragrant hawthorn loads the sheltering hedge,
And on the chesnut tree white blossoms hang,
Gracing its boughs like wreaths of living snow ;
The sycamore is now the haunt of bees,
Who seek to rob it of its balmy wealth ;

Laburnums hang their golden chaplets out,
And silver circlets deck the guelder-rose ;
Blossoms are blushing on the apple tree,
And all around upon the orchard boughs
Those welcome harbingers of fruit are hung.

The primrose and the violet have gone,
Chac'd by a host of many-coloured flowers,
That cluster thickly on the verdant banks ;
And, hid among the reeds and sedges, sings
That imitative sprite, the mocking bird.
At dusky eve the glow-worm lights her lamp,
A cheering beacon to the nightingale,
Which in its covert singeth sweet and clear,
Whilst far away the cuckoo's notes are heard,
That bird of spring who chanteth night and day.

Welcome, sweet May ! thou darling of the bard,
Whether of ancient or of modern time ;
Thou month of spring-tide promise, smiling May ,
Thou month of blushing blossoms, and sweet flowers,
Thou "merry month," thou best-belov'd of birds,
Thou emblem of all fresh and beauteous things,
I give thee welcome, and I bid thee hail !

Thou art not honour'd as in days of old,
When even princes out a-maying went,
And youthful rustics usher'd in thy birth
With music's sound, and lusty blast of horn,
Whilst from some neighbouring wood they branches broke,
Adorning them with crowns of glowing buds,
That they might deck their dwellings in thy praise.
No more do maids at break of morning stray
Where they may find thy bright and pearly dew,
Which gossips tell will add unto their bloom,
And make them lovelier in their lovers' eyes.

Seldom we see the village May-pole now,
Rearing on high its flowery-crested head,
Whilst active dancers whirl about its base,
And quips and cranks and laughter loud abound.
Thou hast no more the ancient Morris-dance,
With fool grotesque, and young and beauteous queen :
The fair made Marian, with her crown of gold,
Juggler, and friar, and prancing paste-board steed,
Spaniard, Morisco, and the minstrel old,
No more appear thy birth to celebrate.
These have departed, but thou comest still,
Rich in thy pristine treasures, lovely May ;

The trees and flowers still glorify thy path,
And breeze and bird make music unto thee ;
Still dost thou to the poet give delight,
And, therefore, do I welcome thee again,
Rejoicing in thy presence, lovely May.

The “*Morris-dance*” was an ancient English game peculiar to the first of May. Before the time of Queen Elizabeth it was composed of twelve figures. 1. The Bavaan fool, with his yellow slabbering bib. 2. Maid Marian, the Queen of May, with a golden crown upon her head, hair dishevelled, and in her left hand a red pink, as the emblem of Summer. (Their May Day of course now falls twelve days later.) 3. A Franciscan friar, in the full clerical tonsure, with corded girdle and wallet, the grey-russet habit, a chaplet of white and red beads in his right hand, and looks, expressive of humility, *commencing* with the ground. 4. Hocus Pocus, in a *juggler's jerkin*, with the Epimedium upon his forehead. 5. The Hobby-horse was a steed of pasteboard, in which the master danced, and displayed tricks of legerdemain, such as “Threading the needle,” “Daggers in the nose,” &c.; his golden crown indicates the monarch of the May. 6. A clown, or villane. 7. A franklin, or gentleman. 8. The May-pole, painted yellow and black in spiral lines. Upon it were displayed the red cross of St. George, or the banner of England, and a white pennon emblazoned. 9. Tom, the Piper, as the ancient minstrel, with his pipe and *tambour de besque*. 10. A Spaniard, with flying sleeves. 11. A Morisco, in a purple coronetted cap and feather. 12. The counterfeit fool, with his bauble, cock's-comb and bell, and, what a fool's-cap never lacked, the asinine auricles.

TO JOHN CRITCHLEY PRINCE.

When first I saw thy sweet and polish'd lines,
Though they were penn'd not by a scholar'd hand,
Even as the sun through mist of morning shines,
I knew that they were destin'd to command
The praise and wonder of thy native land,
And on the banner of wide-circling Fame
Inscribe in dazzling hues thy then unhonour'd name.

And so it is!—thy aspirations high,
Thy powerful pleadings for a suffering race,
Thy ardent love for heavenly Poesy,
The feelings pure which in each line we trace,
Have for thee gain'd a proud and envied place
Among the bards who heavenwards cleave their way,
And gain by strength of wing a bright immortal day.

Thou need'st not now, a wretched outcast, tread,
With slow and weary steps, a foreign shore—
England will find a shelter for thy head,
And thou shalt know the want of food no more ;
Be true unto thyself—there is in store
A future, rich in many happy days,
And thou shalt find the bard treasur'd as are his lays.

Walk forth and worship Nature as thou hast,
Drink in the beauty of her vales and streams ;
Wander again as when, in days long past,
Thy soul, enwrapt in its poetic dreams,
Became instinct with holy Sabbath themes,
And thou, in thoughts majestic and sublime,
Pour'd forth that noble strain which shall outlive all time.

Give us thy songs of freedom once again ;
Raise high thy voice for liberty and love ;
Tell to the world the woes of toiling men,
And thou their dearest champion wilt prove—
Perchance the great and mighty thou may'st move :
Speak in thy wonted tones aloud of wrong—
Who may divine the power and influence of song ?

Hang not thy harp upon the willows now,
Be not with what thou'st won alone content ;
A wreath more glorious yet may grace thy brow—
On high achievements be thy mind still bent ;
Gifts like to thine were surely never meant
To be unused or thrown neglected by—
Well is he paid whose dower is immortality.

Hard is his task who toileth on unknown,
Unknowing and despairing of his lot ;
Such was thy fate—such is not now thine own—
Kind friends are round—oblivion will not blot
What thou may'st pen ; then on and falter not ;
The wide world ever is an unclos'd book—
Go forth, my friend, go forth, and on its pages look.

ZAIDEE.

(FROM THE ARABIC.)

Timid and most gentle Zaidee,
I have watch'd thee 'mid the throng,
Grae'd by many a lovely lady—
Ladies beautiful and young :
They were deck'd in robes of splendour,
Thou wert clad in simple garb ;
But thine eyes, with beamings tender,
Piere'd my heart like winged barb.

Still the arrow there is lying,
And I cannot turn away,
But must say, though nigh to dying,
Wound me with another ray ;
Kill me with thine eyes of beauty,
I will hail so sweet a death,
And will bless thee, as a duty,
Zaidee, with my latest breath !

To thy face the blush advances—
Flowers, though mute, of love can speak—
And my wild, impassion'd glances,
Have sown roses on thy cheek :
Shall I dare to pluck them, dearest,
And their hues in kisses steep ?
Tell me, Zaidee, why thou fearest ?—
He who plants may surely reap.

THE MEETING AND PARTING.

We met but once, and parted then for ever,
As ships encountering on a sunny sea,
One doom'd, perchance, to reach its haven never,
The other aye to glide on tranquilly :
Thou wilt be as the glad and prosperous bark—
My destin'd course is clouded o'er and dark.

We met and parted—in the bright hall ringing,
Thy laugh still sounds amid the young and gay,
Eternal blossoms in thy pathway springing,
For me—few flowers have deck'd my thorny way :
Of vanish'd joys my heart hath been the shrine—
Of words and looks—and, most of all, of thine.

I saw thee with the light of beauty shining
On cheek and lip, and flashing from thine eyes ;

Around thy forehead silken curls were twining,
And thy breast heav'd, but not with passion's sighs ;
The buoyant gladness of thy spirit shone
In every glanee, and spoke in every tone.

I felt the music of thy sweet voice stealing
Across my soul—I press'd thy lily hand ;
Within my breast there sprung a joyous feeling,
And hopes, like shadows from the dreamer's land ;
Blissful aspirings crowded to my brain,
And my heart throbb'd with wishes wild and vain.

A few short hours of gladness, and we parted,
Thou to be worshipp'd and with joy elate,
And I to muse on thee all lonely-hearted,
And sigh for one who reek'd not of my fate ;
Thou to an honour'd and a happy lot,
I for content to seek, yet find it not.

I pour'd no vows unto thy youthful beauty,
I told not how my soul was wrapt in thee,
Nor sought to win thy pure heart from its duty—
I knew that thou wert not a mate for me ;
I knew our different destinies must lie
As far apart as are the sea and sky.

We met and parted whilst the rose was glowing,
In bloom and loveliness, upon thy face,
Whilst light and joy from thy dark eyes were flowing,
And thou wert girt with every witching grace—
Ere youth's bright glories had been quench'd in night,
Or one dear charm had faded 'neath Time's blight.

Had I thine image through long years have cherish'd,
And mark'd thy beauties vanish one by one,
'Till bloom, and grace, and every charm had perish'd,
Could I have look'd on thee when all were gone ?
No, no ! I shrin'd thee rich in maiden spell,
And breath'd at once my first and last farewell.

THE OFFERING.*

Hard is his lot who cannot bring,
At least, a lowly offering,
To place upon the favour'd shrine
On which bright eyes have deign'd to shine :
When on the ear sweet accents fall
From ladies' lips, the gentle call,
That asks us for our aid to bless
The dark abodes of dire distress,
Comes like an angel's pleading strain,
That asks, but cannot ask in vain.
The trumpet's blast awakes the land,
And men rush forth with flashing brand,

* Written on the fly-leaves of two copies of " Rhyme, Romance, and Revery," presented to the Grand National Anti-Corn Law Bazaar, held in the Theatre Royal, Manchester, on Monday, the 31st of January, 1842, and following days.

To mingle in the bloody strife,
And play the game of death and life ;
But woman's voice is never heard,
Unless when pity prompts the word—
Then goes she forth the cause to plead
Of wretchedness and suffering need :
Enough our sympathies to move,
To know that she the cause approve.

Upon the altar now I lay
My humble gift—I cannot pay
A costly tribute, but my heart
Would all its warmest hopes impart
That proud success your course may cheer,
And bless and brighten your career ;
Oh, be it yours the happy fate,
To glad the poor and desolate,
To wipe the tear of want away,
And hunger's bitter pangs allay ;
May Heaven approve your generous toil ;
May Joy and Plenty bless the soil,
And Justice chase each cloud afar,
That hides the light of Freedom's star :
Though 'tis not mine your task to share,
Accept my offering and my prayer.

SONNET

INSCRIBED TO T. A. TIDMARSH, ESQ.,

ON HIS PRESENTING ME WITH A COPY OF SHELLEY'S WORKS.

Dear friend, no purer gift could'st thou bestow
Than the outpourings of his gentle heart,
Who love to all sought ever to impart ;
Whose thoughts gush'd forth in spiritual flow,
Whose noble fancy over all did throw
The magic influence of the poet's art ;
Whose mind was, as a jewel-crowded mart,
Replete with gems whose intellectual glow
Flash'd on the brain like beams of mental fire :
Yet the world lov'd him not, for he was one
Who, when he struck the soul-awakening lyre,
Threw glory round him like the mid-day sun ;
And earthly men the dazzling light malign'd,
Whose rays of genius struck their weak eyes blind.

YOUTH'S RETURN.

I awoke in the depth of a starless night,
And gaz'd on my darken'd room ;
I was as one struck down with a blinded sight,
And doom'd to a world of gloom,
Or as a spirit hurl'd from a realm of light,
Or living man in a tomb.

Oh, my soul had been bath'd in a blissful dream—
My youth had return'd again ;
Like the spell-broken rush of an ice-bound stream,
The blood cours'd through every vein ;
Free from sorrow and care did my bosom seem
As a sunny ray from stain.

Beaming eyes, that were dimm'd not by sorrow's tears,
Were mirror'd within mine own ;

Blessed voices discours'd to my ravished ears,
With joy in each loving tone ;
And my soul breath'd in converse, for doubts and fears
Were things to my heart unknown.

On my cheeks and my temples the soft breeze blew,
With a fresh and a balmy breath ;
Brightly green were the leaves that above me grew,
And fragrant the flowers beneath ;
Blithely singing, the wild-birds past me flew—
Nought told of decay or death.

Affection again o'er my bosom had power,
In its first delicious spring,
When woman appeareth a heavenly dower,
And love seems a holy thing,
Pure and chaste as the dew on an opening flower,
Or dust on the butterfly's wing.

I awoke, and my blood it was thick and cold,
For the vision'd forms had past,
And as well might mine arms have sought to enfold
The fitful and moaning blast :
Long, long on those cherish'd and lov'd ones of old
Had the grave's damp earth been cast.

The stillness is broken by my child's low sighs,
My spirit has ceas'd to pine ;
I think of my children's love-fraught eyes,
And the bliss that still is mine ;
And fond thoughts, sweetest wife, in my heart arise,
Which tell of the truth of thine.

A FRIENDLY TRIBUTE,

ADDRESSED TO ROBERT ROSE, ESQ. (THE BARD OF COLOUR).

Thou who hast wander'd from a land
Which lies beyond the foaming main,
I greet thee with a cordial hand,
And hail thee in an humble strain ;
For though thy cheek may wear the stain
Imparted by a sunnier sky,
Thou dost high gifts from God inherit,
And few there are of fairer dye,
Who boast thy true and generous spirit.

Oh, many are the happy hours
Which 'neath thy friendly roof have flown,
When we have cull'd poetic flowers,
And felt their incense round us thrown ;
No discord unto us was known—

We felt the pure and magic spell
The minstrel weaves, about us stealing,
And only paus'd that we might tell
The beauties of each high revealing.

Assembled round thy cheerful board,
Oft has it been my lot to meet
The friends whose love my heart hath stor'd,
The friends I ever joy to greet ;
Then time hath fled with winged feet,
'Mid happy talk and pleasant song,
And every thought and word of sorrow
The influence of thy cheering tongue
Hath banish'd till the coming morrow.

The poet's song and pleasant rhyme
Thy fancy with delight imbues,
And thou, the first of Indian clime,
Hast paid thy worship to the Muse ;
And, oh, be thine the lot to choose
The path to honour and to fame :
Tell of thy far-off isle some story—
If thou hast genius let the flame
Shed on thy native land its glory.

Give me the man, whate'er his race,
Whate'er his creed or clime may be,
Who spurns at all that's low and base,
And I will hold him kin to me :—
Oh, soon may all that moment see
When prejudice no more shall reign,
And all but love shall have departed !—
I hail thee, then, my friend, again,
Thou kind, and frank, and liberal-hearted !

THE SONGS OF ENGLAND.

The Songs of England ! who their might shall tell,
The strong, deep influence which their sounds impart ;
Like magic charms they in the memory dwell—
The birds encag'd within the human heart,
Whose voices oft in saddest moments start,
Calling before us many a vanish'd hour
And forms belov'd, who by their minstrel art
Entranc'd our spirits with a spell of power.

The Songs of England ! they the heart have cheer'd
Of the lone sailor on the billowy sea ;
When through far climes his vessel hath been steer'd,
The simple words of some old melody
Have brought unto his mind his wanderings free,
When in his boyhood he was wont to roam
By winding dale, and over pleasant lea,
Through the green precincts of his native home.

The trees no more are branching o'er his head,
He hears the creaking of the corded mast,
The rocking plank re-echoes to his tread,
And in his ear fierce howls the chainless blast—
Instead of plains around are waters vast ;
Unto his spirit childish memories creep,
And all unmann'd he dreameth of the past,
Listening the song that lull'd him to his sleep.

The Songs of England ! they have oft inspir'd
To deeds of glory, and of lofty aim ;
The warlike youth hath at their sound been fir'd,
And fervent rush'd to gory fields of fame,
To find an early death, or win a name :
More potent than the trumpet's breath, they fan
The heroic spark till it becomes a flame,
And songs are chanted in the battle-van.

No more the minstrel roams from hall to hall,
And with impassion'd fingers sweeps the strings ;
No more at tilt and courtly festival
In praise of war and lady fair he sings ;
No more the knight upon his charger springs,
Breathing a love-lay to his damsel true,
Whilst on the breeze her snowy scarf she flings,
And waves with kiss-fraught hand a last adieu.

No more we hear the plaintive serenade
Breaking the stillness of the drowsy night,
Whilst at her casement stands the timid maid,
Listening the sounds with trembling delight,
And ever and anon, in wild affright,
Thinking she hears some kinsman's angry words—
The strain hath ceas'd, and in the silver light
Dark forms appear—she hears the clash of swords.

Those times have fled, but still we have the song,
Gladdening our bosoms as it did of old ;
Still it delights the aged and the young,
Arouses still the timid and the bold :
When summer's sun hath ting'd the hills with gold,
The lowly peasant sings amid his corn,
And when stern winter pincheth him with cold,
The Christmas ditty makes him less forlorn.

The mother singeth to her smiling child,
The grandsire to the urchin on his knee ;
The mourning heart is oft of grief beguil'd
By the low words of some sweet melody ;
And when to scenes of social mirth we flee,
And forms we love are gather'd all around,
Still doth the song improve our hours of glee,
And joy grow sweeter at sweet music's sound.

The exile, wandering 'neath a foreign sky,
 Hummeth a snatch of some remember'd song,
And tears of sorrow dim his drooping eye,
 As fancy revels long-lost scenes among ;
The patriot pours his soul's full tide along,
And in the stream of song it floweth free :—
 England ! thy bards shall never plead for wrong—
Their themes are virtue, truth, and liberty !

A HAUNT OF CHILDHOOD.

There was a meadow where, in days of old,
I lov'd to gather wild and simple flowers—
The snow-white daisies and the cups of gold
Were then to me the richest of all dowers ;
There did I pass full many a summer's day,
Chasing at times some insect fluttering by,
Until aweary with my ceaseless play,
I threw me down amid the grass to lie,
And upwards gaz'd upon the azure sky,
Wishing that I to the white clouds could sail,
Swift as the birds that thither seem'd to fly,
And whose light wings I thought could never fail :
Oft have I crav'd, in after hours of pain,
For childhood's bliss and that green haunt again.

LINES ON A PORTRAIT

OF MASTER RIDEHALGH, AGED FIVE YEARS.

Fair boy ! thy painted lineaments I scan,
And view thy form in Scottish vestments clad,
Like a young chief of the Mackenzie clan—
Plum'd bonnet, philabeg, and motley plaid.

Thou art no native of the Highland hills,
The English rose is blooming on thy face,
English the blood thy youthful veins that fills,
And gives thy form its beauty and its grace.

Thy sire was born beneath an English sky,
Thy mother is a gentle English dame ;
Thy smiling lips, thy bright and winning eye,
The harsher features of the Scot would shame.

Young masquer! deck'd out by parental love,
Thou need'st not blush in any garb to stand ;
Thy bearing frank, and limbs symmetric, prove
Thee worthy son of any race or land.

Thy faithful dog is standing by thy side,
Like his young master, full of vigorous life,
As though he long'd to roam the meadows wide,
And join with thee in wild and playful strife.

A mimic gun is lying at thy feet—
Thou can'st not harm the wild bird on its wing,
Nor, as thy sire, with hound and courser fleet,
Follow the chase whilst wood and welkin ring.

They tell me, too, thou art no common child,
That even now fair Science yields thee joy ;
That thou from ruder sports are oft beguil'd,
Whilst tiny engine gives thy mind employ.

Farewell !—I leave thee to thy happy lot,
'Thou best belov'd, with health and joy elate ;
May no dark cloud thy sunny prospects blot,
But bright, unshadow'd ever be thy fate.

A LEGEND OF THE HEART.

The lights have vanish'd one by one,
Till every taper's blaze hath gone ;
The moonbeams through each casement creep,
And all seems hush'd in death-like sleep.

Young Imma lists with anxious ear,
But not a single sound can hear ;
She leaves the chamber of her rest,
And couch of snowy white unprest.

With silent footsteps steals the maid,
And starteth oft, as though afraid
The beatings of her heart are heard,
That flutters like a captive bird.

With cautious step she treads each stair,
Her light foot dwells a moment there,
Around a hurried glance is thrown,
And then again she glideth on.

Now she hath pass'd the winding stairs,
And with a quicker pace repairs
Along the wide and high-roof'd hall,
Till she hath gain'd the outer wall.

The pale moon shines on dark green tree,
The low wind sighs its minstrelsy,
And, shaken from the shrub and flower,
The bright dew falls in silver shower.

She hurries on, the lovely one,
Around her form a mantle thrown,
Whilst pours the sweet-voic'd nightingale
Upon her ear its mournful tale.

She passeth, as a star when driven
Along the cloudless face of Heaven ;
Her fair hair floating in the wind,
Tree, shrub, and flower are left behind.

A bounding tread is heard, a rush,
And to her face upsprings the blush ;
To earth are cast her fawn-like eyes,
Whilst to her arms a dear one flies.

Yes ! they had chosen that still hour,
When all was hush'd in hall and bower,
To meet, no witness to their love,
Save gleaming moon that smil'd above.

But who is he that meeteth there
That lady graceful, proud, and fair ?
Why doth she leave her father's hall,
And steal beyond the outer wall ?

The youth is one of low estate,
The maiden's sire is rich and great ;
But what cares Love for high degree ?—
He laughs at wealth and ancestry.

Ever are secret raptures sweet—
The youth is at the lady's feet ;
He poureth forth impassion'd sighs,
And readeth answers in her eyes.

Oh, would that you had never met,
For watchful spies are round you set ;
The aged sire, in furious mood,
Is bent upon a deed of blood.

There comes a swift and winged dart,
Which cleaves its way throught beating heart,
And he who lately blest her charms
Lies dead within the lady's arms.

And shall I tell the maiden's fate ?—
She liv'd on long, though desolate.
Better had she been with the dead,
For Reason's guiding-star had fled.

Though by her kindred guarded well,
When shades of night around her fell,
She ever left her father's hall,
And wander'd round the outer wall.

It is a legend of old date,
Which ancient gossips oft narrate,
And some who tell the mournful tale,
Say they have heard the lady's wail.

They tell that still her form is seen
Gliding the moon's white rays between,
That she may mourn the hapless fate
Of him who died through love and hate.

MY LADY'S CHAMBER.

My Lady's chamber—there at night she sleepeth,
Perhance of me and happiness to dream,
Whilst through her casement the white moonshine creepeth,
And floateth round her in a silver stream.

My Lady's chamber—when the moon is creeping
With quiet beams into her place of rest,
Oh, how I wish that I might watch her sleeping,
Even as those rays that kiss her cheek and breast.

My Lady's chamber—oft I wander, sighing,
Beneath her window in the midnight hours,
Whilst drooping flowers about my feet are lying,
And think of her, the sweetest of all flowers.

My Lady's chamber—would I were a blossom,
So I might shed my dying odours there ;
Or rose, to guard with thorny spear her bosom,
Or primrose pale to hide amid her hair.

My Lady's chamber—there at night she bendeth,
And her lips murmur low a virgin prayer ;
If pleading pure to throne of bliss ascendeth,
Then Heaven will surely hold her in its care.

THE PEOPLE'S PRAYER.

God of the universe ! oh, hear our cries,
And soften the oppressor's harden'd heart ;
Teach him to listen to our sorrowing sighs,
And act a wiser and a nobler part :
A famish'd people in their anguish groan,
And every air is laden with their moan.

The very sunbeams, raining down from heaven,
A dazzling mockery seem around to fling ;
The summer-breeze across our pale brows driven,
Beareth no joy upon its balmy wing :
The skies are beauteous, and the earth is fair,
Our hearts alone are fill'd with gloom and care.

The waving blade is verduring the plain,
The gentle flowers are diamonding the earth ;

'The lark soars upwards with a joyous strain,
And luseious fruit is blossoming to birth :
The lakes are sparkling, and the streams are bright—
Our souls alone are veil'd in sorrow's night.

The earth o'erflows with beauty yet untold—
The shadowy twilight and the blush of morn ;
The burning mid-day with its light of gold,
And myriad stars that in the night are born,
All, all are full of loveliness and Thee—
Oh, when shall man with joy Thy wonders see !

Thou source of happiness and life to all !
Giver of plenty to this favour'd earth !
Teach Thy proud sons to listen to the call
That comes in vain from faint and suffering worth ;
Teach them to feel the toil-worn mourner's sighs,
And still his children's sad and hungry cries.

Let not the poor the great and wealthy find
More pitiless than is the desert-brute—
The savage tiger preys not on his kind :
Oh, let Thy Spirit in their souls take root,
So that again upon this pleasant isle
Prosperity may shed its glorious smile.

Thou madest man the image of thy form,
To bear awhile the ills of earthly life ;
Let him not sink beneath a fellow-worm,
Crush'd by a lot of sorrow and of strife ;
Grant him to walk with buoyant heart and tread—
Bless him with coin for toil, and give him bread.

TO MY INFANT SISTER.

Artless little cherub fair,
With thy twining flaxen hair,
And thine eye so skyey bright,
And thy teeth so snowy white ;
Ever be thine open brow
Free from grief and care as now ;
May thy future ever be
Pure as this thine infancy.
Nestled in thy mother's breast,
Oh, how placid is thy rest :
Tell me, what doth now beguile
Thy witching features to a smile ?
It must be a vision sweet
That thy dreamy gaze doth greet.
Are thy waking gambols blent
With thy slumber, innocent ?
Or are things from man conceal'd,
To thy guileless mind reveal'd ;

And the secrets of the sky
Open'd to thy close-shut eye ?
Whatsoe'er its theme may be,
Such a dream age may not see.

Now is burst sleep's flowery thrall—
Thou art mirth and frolic all ;
And the less than half-formed word,
Flowing from thy lips, is heard ;
And thy giddy laughter tells
Of the joy that with thee dwells,
As thou, careless, ramblest o'er,
With unpractis'd steps, the floor.
Thou may'st yet, fair child, possess
Richer share of loveliness,
Form more graeeful, riper bloom,
In the days thou hast to come ;
And the treasures of thy mind
May, by years, be more refin'd ;
But thou ne'er will meet with bliss
Unalloy'd with woe as this.

When life's summer-hours are thine,
Sober autumn's will be mine ;

When thy summer's past away,
I shall be in life's decay ;
When thy autumn shall have past,
I may then have look'd my last.
Ne'er akin in life our lot—
Thou wilt live, I be forgot ;
Or remember'd but by those
Who must soon seek like repose ;
Thou must, too, seek that dark bourne,
To thy native earth return ;
Then alike our state will be—
Death will deal equality ;
That same sound which thee doth wake,
My repose will also break.

A mother's care now guides thee on,
Tells thee what to court or shun ;
When she no more is by thy side,
Look to virtue as thy guide :
Thus thy course let virtue shield,
Ever to her precepts yield ;
Thou may'st then look on the tomb,
Nor quail to meet its chilling gloom :
Thou wilt quit this earthly night,
To live in day of heavenly light.

EARLY LOVE.

'Tis many years, sweet Margaret,
Since thou and I did part ;
'Tis many years since first we met,
And plighted heart for heart ;
Yet oft, in sorrowing solitude,
Upon thine image do I brood.

'Tis long, oh, once beloved one,
Since that delicious hour,
When first I spoke in love's low tone,
And o'er thy heart had power ;
Since first I saw, upon thy cheek,
Affection's morn in blushes break.

Pale was thy cheek, dear Margaret,
And shy thine eye of blue ;
But lovelier flower was never wet
With heaven's untainted dew,
Than thou, when first upon me shone
The charms which made thee all mine own.

I do remember well the day
We parted for awhile ;
Thy brow was moist and cold as clay—
I strove in vain to smile ;
For tears came streaming from mine eyes,
And thou wert chok'd with bitter sighs.

Oft did I read to thee at night
From some heart-waking book,
And mark thee drink with deep delight
My every word and look ;
I felt thy breathing stir my hair,
And on my cheek thy ringlets fair.

Oft, too, when nights were dark and cold,
And snow was on the earth,
Thou would'st thine arms around me fold,
And shrink to send me forth ;

I laugh'd away thy timid fear,
And yet it made thee still more dear.

The brimming goblet soon is spilt,
Where joys bright bubbles gleam ;
Our love is as a palace built
Upon a frozen stream ;
The sun, which shines with dazzling ray,
Dissolves our hopes and trust away.

Coldness and doubts, fair Margaret,
Between our young hearts came :
The paper with thy tears was wet,
That bore thy words of blame ;
But dark and shadow'd was our fate,
And we did part, but not in hate.

And many, many years have past,
Since last I look'd on thee ;
I know not where thy lot is cast,
Yet still thy memory
At times comes rushing on my brain,
And fills my heart with thee again.

Oh, if another should have woo'd,
And won thee for his bride,
May peace and gladness o'er you brood,
As through this world you glide ;
And when thy soul from earth is riven,
Be thou a blessed saint of heaven !

WE HAVE MET.

We have met—thou art gone !

I beheld thee in gladness ;
Few moments pass'd on,
And I left thee in sadness ;
Thou art far from my sight—
I regret thee in sorrow,
As a sweet dream of night,
Which we sigh for the morrow.

Oh, the bloom of thy cheek,
And the love-waking flashes,
That so sunnily break
Through thine eyes' silken lashes :
Oh, the glow of thy smile,
And the flow of thy tresses—
I am bound by each wile,
As the hawk in its jesses.

I have gaz'd upon those
With the eye brightly shining,
With the cheek of the rose,
And the graceful locks twining ;
But my glance never fell
On a form of such beauty
As thine, whose deep spell
Lures my heart from its duty.

Though thou may'st forget,
And though parted for ever,
Of the time when we met,
I shall cease to think never ;
Though thou think'st not of me,
Still thine image I'll cherish,
And remembrance of thee
With my life can but perish.

THE ARAB'S LAMENT.

Maisuna, thou art lost to me,
A caliph claims thee for his bride,
And thou no more, with footsteps free,
Wilt wander, lov'd one, by my side.

The caliph cannot love so well
As did the simple Arab youth;
Oh, does thy memory ever tell
Of lowly tent and heart of truth.

When from her home they bore my love,
I follow'd far the gorgeous train ;
But, ah, in vain—that rifted dove
Ne'er blest my aching sight again.

My steed was beautiful and fleet,
And lov'd his Arab master well ;
From mine own hand his food he eat,
And shar'd with me the cooling well.

No courser pass'd him in the race,
When me upon his back he bore ;
And when we follow'd in the chace,
The ostrich vainly fled before.

But onwards still the camels flew,
The camels with the feet of wind ;
No longer could my steed pursue,
And I was left in grief behind.

Yes, I was left behind in grief,
A grief that evermore must be :
One hope alone can give relief—
Maisuna, dost thou think of me ?

THOUGHTS IN ABSENCE.

Where thou residest I may not reside,
And where I dwell thy destiny is not,
But in my heart will cherish'd thoughts abide
Of thee, whom nought can e'er from memory blot.

Together in our childhood's days we dwelt,
And shar'd together childhood's joy and pain ;
Oh, bliss more pure in those gone times was felt
Than after-life may ever feel again.

May fate's decrees ne'er cause thee to repine—
May'st thou be happy, though afar from me ;
A chequer'd destiny, alas, is mine,
One of my griefs to be apart from thee.

'Tis not alone cold friendship that we feel,
Nor the emotion of absorbing love,
But sympathy that words may not reveal,
A kindred nature with our beings wove.

Albeit another thy young heart doth claim,
Still may the tie that bindeth us endure ;
Though he adore thee with a deeper flame,
He for thy welfare breathes no wish more pure.

The time must come when beauty will decay—
Should they prove false who pay thee homage now,
Then from those fickle ones, oh, turn away—
Mine is no dotage on fair cheek and brow.

United to thee by the bond of mind,
My prayers shall follow thee through good and ill ;
Whate'er betide thee, thou shalt ever find
One breast unchang'd, one humble haven still.

THE PLEDGE.

Now fill ye up your goblets high,
And pledge me a toast right merrily ;
Let all your eyes, as bright they shine,
Be mirror'd in the purple wine,
And as it foams with flashing light,
We'll pledge our ladies fair and bright.

The twinkling eyes of dreamy Night
From his sable brow shall take their flight ;
The ruddy Morn in joy shall laugh,
Ere we the wine will cease to quaff,
And again, old Father Care to spite,
We'll pledge our ladies fair and bright.

Away, my mates, with sorrow now !
No grief must cloud the heart or brow,
No care must hold our souls in thrall,
For this is Beauty's festival,
And, through the gay and joyous night,
We'll pledge our ladies fair and bright.

THE DYING BOY.

There was one feeble light
Within the chamber lone,
But it was all too bright
For what it shone upon ;
That little taper's cheerless blaze
Beam'd on the wreck of early days.

Upon a couch there lay
A pale and dying boy ;
And must he pass away,
In his spring-tide of joy ?
Nought had he known of grief or care,
And must he die, the young, the fair ?

The bright blue of the sky,
The glancing of the streams—
He felt 'twas hard to die,
For they were in his dreams :
Unto his heart fond memories crept,
He look'd around him, and he wept.

He cast a look around,
Well might the tear-drops start ;
His failing eyes had found
A sight which wrung his heart ;
His mother and his sire were there,
Two images of mute despair.

His mother bent to kiss
His cold and pallid brow ;
It was to her a bliss,
Ay, e'en to kiss it now ;
Age had not made her bright eyes dim,
Nor stol'n her bloom—'twas grief for him.

One sad, one anguish'd tear
Burst from his father's eye ;
He turn'd, he could not bear
To see his first-born die,

To see that thing of youth and bloom
Thus early destin'd for the tomb.

He ceas'd to weep, that child,
He grasp'd his father's hand,
And on his mother smil'd :—
“ There is another land ;
Mourn not, dear parents, that I go,
For there is joy, and here is woe,

Weep not that to the skies
So soon my soul is driven ;
The earth hath many ties,
But sweeter far hath Heaven.”
A glow had flush'd his cheek—it fled ;
He ceas'd to speak—the boy was dead.

I SAW THEE AND BLESSED THEE.

I saw thee and bless'd thee, thou beautiful one,
And pray'd that in sunshine thy life might glide on :
Like the child of a vision wert thou to my sight,
A being of gladness, of love, and of light ;
As radiant thy cheek as the morning cloud's hue,
As lovely thine eye as the even's pale blue,
Far sweeter thy voice than the lute's mellow tone—
I heard and I bless'd thee, thou beautiful one.

I saw thee and lov'd thee, and pour'd in thine ear
The low whisper'd accents which told thou wert dear ;
Thy glance sought the earth, and thy cheek had a glow,
And a crimson cloud pass'd o'er the heaven of thy brow ;
A smile sunn'd thy features—in transport I prest
Thy bosom of snow to mine own throbbing breast,
And fondly I deem'd thy young heart I had won—
I heard and I bless'd thee, thou beautiful one.

I lov'd thee and bless'd thee, nor thought that thine eye
Beam'd alike upon all, as the stars from the sky ;
I knew not the bliss, which thy kiss gave to me,
Might be tasted by all, as the flower by the bee :
Thou art as that fruit which enchanteth the eye,
Whilst ashes and dust 'neath its loveliness lie ;
I know thou art faithless—my bright dream hath gone—
I mourn o'er thy falsehood, thou beautiful one.

OH, AM I NOT THY BRIDE ?

He gaz'd upon the maid
With fondness and delight;
Oh, well he lov'd her cheek of bloom,
Her dark eyes' tender light,
And as in joy he sat
By that young beauty's side,
He murmur'd in her ear the words,
“Oh, wilt thou be my bride ?”

He left his native land,
For wealth and fame he strove,
Yet never did his heart forget
His first, his far-off love ;
At many a gilded shrine
Not long might he have sigh'd,
But nought could win his soul from her,
His own betrothed bride.

Laurels and gold were his—
With toil and travel pale,
The wanderer hied, with weary feet,
To the green and well-known vale ;
He sought his true-love's home,
His heart beat high with pride,
As joyously he hasten'd on
To claim his destin'd bride.

Through the shadow of the trees
He saw the white walls gleam,
And the ivy twining round the porch,
As it was in his dream ;
And the river, where of old
His tiny barks he tried,
With a murmuring sound was gliding past
The dwelling of his bride.

Once more he met his love—
They met in wild despair,
And long he gaz'd upon her brow,
For death was written there ;
He led her to the church,
Where vow to vow replied,
When in his faithful arms, alas,
She sank, a dying bride.

Her cheek was pale and cold,
Her bright eye had grown dim,
Yet still it shone with meteor light,
As it was turn'd on him ;
That fond look was her last,
In his embrace she died,
And these last words were on her lips,
“ Oh, am I not thy bride ? ”

A BALLAD.

“ Cast the gay robes from off thy form,
And cease thine hair to braid ;
Thy love to thee will come no more,
He woos another maid ;
And broken are the many vows
That he hath pledg’d to thee—
He woos another maid, and this
His bridal-morn will be !”

“ False unto me ! oh, say not so,
For if thy tale be true,
And he I love be lost to me,
I shall not live to rue ;
If he do take another mate,
Before the holy shrine,
Another ne’er shall have my heart—
Death will be mate of mine !”

She cast the gay robes from her form,
And donn'd a snow-white gown;
She loosen'd from her locks the braid,
And let them droop adown;
She flung around her lovely head
The thin shroud of her veil,
To hide her fast descending tears,
And cheek as moon-ray pale.

With feeble, yet with hurried steps,
Unto the church she hied,
And there she saw the false of heart
Receive another bride :—
The bridal-pageant swept along,
Till all the train had fled—
Why staid the lone deserted one ?
She slumber'd with the dead !

THE WARRIOR'S DEATH.

The young knight fell while on the foe,
His blows were showering fast ;
But the Paynim steel that laid him low
By dastard hand was cast.

His bright and martial eye grew dim,
As his page knelt by his side ;
Yet though he knew death's hand on him,
He griev'd not that he died.

He fell as he had wish'd, in fame,
On the plain of holy strife ;
And he had earn'd a hero's name—
To honour what was life ?

And thus unto his page he said,
Whilst the youth was sobbing loud,
“ Oh, quickly haste, when I am dead,
To my father's castle proud.

And tell him thou did'st mark me die,
As noble warrior should,
Unshrieking, and without a sigh,
For my country, and my God.

Tell him that grief must not be his
That here I met a grave,
For say my death was death of bliss—
I die midst bold and brave.

And take this ring, my faithful page,
To my young affianc'd bride,
And say that, in the battle's rage,
Her love was still my pride.

And, pray thee, tell she must not weep,
For tears my fate would shame :—
I die, yet fear not death's cold sleep—
I still shall live in fame !”

The knight then to his cold lips prest,
Whilst sense was fleeting fast,
The cross that hung upon his breast,
And gaze to Heaven he cast.

The cross fell from his lifeless hand,
His spirit pass'd away,
And the bravest of the Christian band
In death's embraces lay.

THE REQUEST.

Maiden with the star-bright eye,
And the cheek of lily dye,
Wilt thou pardon him whose Muse
Thee for theme hath dar'd to choose ?
Strain can ne'er all worthless be,
When it tells, sweet girl, of thee,
Tells of faultless form and face,
Tells of beauty's every grace.

Oft enraptur'd have I hung
On the accents of thy tongue,
On thy chasteñ'd eloquence,
Fraught with feeling, fraught with sense,
And I've pray'd that no unrest
E'er might harbour in thy breast,
Or a thought or boding sad
Lurk 'neath brow so seeming glad.

Maid with locks of paly gold,
Had'st thou liv'd in days of old,
All had thought thou wert divine,
All had worshipp'd at thy shrine ;
Thou shalt be *my* goddess *now*—
To thy will, fair power, I bow ;
I have but a heart to give—
Lady, wilt thou it receive ?

Virgin goddess ! hear my sighs,
Grant me favour in thine eyes ;
I am as a storm-tost bark,
With one star its course to mark ;
Should that star withhold its light,
Then the bark must sink in night ;
I am as that bark—oh, be
Thou the guiding star to me !

FINIS.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

400 Pages, post 8vo. price 7s. 6d.,

RHYME, ROMANCE, & REVERY.

LIINES,

BY JOHN CRITCHLEY PRINCE,

WRITTEN ON THE FLY LEAF OF THE ABOVE WORK.

Thou, who hast a gentle mind,
Scan this page, and thou shalt find
“Orient pearls at random strung ;”
Man’s affections sweetly sung—
Rhymes, which fall upon the ear,
Like calm waters, soft and clear—
Stories of Romance, that hold
Thoughts by links of mental gold—
Fitful Reveries, that gleam
From the shadowy realms of dream,
And a thousand precious things,
Which the vagrant fancy brings,
From some far and splendid zone
To sons of genius only known.
Read to wile the leisure hour,—
Read, and care will lose its power ;
If it do not banish pain,
I have read and writ in vain.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

A most graceful and entertaining volume. The poetical portion of the book is characterised by deep feeling, an elegant fancy, an expression always chaste and simple, and frequently picturesque. It includes, also, several domestic pieces which are of singular fidelity and beauty. It is pleasing to us to find that the dominion of poetical libertinism is passing away ; and that the holiest relationships of nature are not now considered as themes too insipid for song. The prose portion of the volume is varied, graphic, and interesting.—*Monthly Magazine*.

There are in this volume many pieces of great beauty. The author has intense feelings, and a faculty of expressing them with the greatest advantage. There are specimens in this work of highly-finished composition.—*Weekly Dispatch*.

Our townsman, Mr. Rogerson, has published a collection of original pieces, from his own pen, consisting of snatches of beautiful poetry, intermingled with short prose stories of considerable interest.—*Manchester Times*.

Some of the prose essays remind us strongly of Washington Irving, especially the essays entitled “A Rainy Day,” “My Nose,” “Meditations on an Old Hat ;” and many of the tales are deeply interesting and well-told. Some of the poetic pieces are perfect gems, and all much above mediocrity.—*Liverpool Mercury*.

This is really an entertaining book. It contains the effusions, gay and grave, poetical and prosaic, of an obviously active and accomplished mind. The chief excellence of the book, considered as a whole, is the variety of its contents. Tales, sketches, sonnets, and lyrics are agreeably interspersed, and keep the reader's attention continually on the stretch.—*Scotsman*.

Here's a volume which, open at what page he will, the reader finds food for the mind, in whatever mood or circumstances he may be placed. If gay, he may heighten his hilarity by the good-humoured, happily-told narrative—if serious and thoughtful,

he may elevate his contemplations by the perusal of some of the pieces on the most solemn subjects ever touched by the pen of the poet, the philosopher, or the divine. We may say that many of the pieces are more full of thought than any similar productions from the pens of men engaged in trade. Manchester is fast advancing in those arts which give a lustre to prosperity, and she has reason to be proud of the poetical productions which have lately teemed from her press, and though last, not least, she may boast of the author of "Rhyme, Romance, and Reverie." We shall conclude by observing that a more agreeable mélange from one pen has seldom met our eye, and we cheerfully and earnestly wish the author the success which his talents merit, and hope that he will be encouraged to nurture a mind possessing considerable power and flexibility—qualities abundantly displayed in the volume now introduced to our readers.—*Stockport Advertiser*.

Mr. Rogerson has come out in a dainty octavo, brimful of pithy poems and agreeable sketches. We would fain let Mr. Rogerson's rhymes speak for themselves, and first, to enlist the heart of the reader, let us extract one verse from "The father on the Loss of a Twin-child." The simplicity and pathos of these few lines are worthy of Wordsworth. There is much that is moving, a good deal that is humourous, and no inconsiderable portion of truly interesting matter in this volume. The great point in this young writer is the true heart-tone that pervades his verses.—*Sunday Times*.

The impression that this volume altogether will give the reader is, that it is the production of a man of decided good taste, some talent, and a scintillation of genius. He owes it to himself to concentrate his abilities on some important subject, and we are fully persuaded that he would succeed, if he would remember the words labour and time.—*Metropolitan Magazine*.

Mr. Rogerson's poetry possesses little of the impetuosity of the mountain stream, leaping from cliff to cliff, resplendent with its short-lived reflection of the glories of a summer sky; it rather resembles the quiet, secluded rivulet, meandering through woody dell or secret grove, disdaining the bright, but gaudy trappings of wealth and state—the warrior's blood-stained trophies, or the drunkard's song; it dwells upon the sanctities of wedded love,

delights to revel in the sweets of virtuous affection, the reminiscence of early friendship, and the sacred breathings of parental affection ; or, quitting the tumult and din of worldly enterprise, and the glare and throng of dissipation and frivolity, it glories in the beauty and wisdom of creative energy, and rises, through the thousand forms of loveliness which adorn the universe, to the great Intelligence which surrounds, penetrates, and upholds all things by the word of his power, and makes "the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." Over many of his prose reveries the imagination of the poet frequently sheds its own radiance, like sunbeams glancing through thick foliage on the quiet surface of the summer stream ; and we are at a loss whether most to admire the even deep flow of thought, or the glowing language in which it is expressed.—*Bradshaw's Journal*.

The author of this amusing volume is Mr. John Bolton Rogerson, of Manchester, a gentleman whose talents have already gained him a high reputation amongst his friends, which reputation, we may expect, will be still further extended, now that a portion of his works are sent forth to the world in a collected form. The various contents and miscellaneous character of the book under consideration are well indicated in the alliterative title which the author has prefixed, prose and poetry, humour and sentiment being most pleasantly and judiciously intermingled. The poetical pieces give evidence of an exuberant fancy, and an easy and graceful style of versification. The prose consists of light tales, sketches, and meditative pieces, which abound with pleasing gushes of thought and felicitously-turned expressions. The style of the prose compositions will remind the reader of Washington Irving. Mr. Rogerson has evidently been a close observer of life and manners, and the reader will find much in this volume that is instructive as well as entertaining.—*Liverpool Albion*.

The pieces are of varied colour and character—grave and gay—prose and verse—tale, essay, legend, lyric, love stanzas, &c., &c., all brief and unambitious, and the whole betraying that love for literary pursuits, which none ever entertained without being the wiser, the better, and the happier for it.—*New Monthly Magazine*.

The volume before us is indicative of a lively imagination, vivid powers of description, a feeling heart, and a tolerably cultivated

intellect. The greater proportion of the pieces are marked by talent which, with careful study and attention, promises fair to place the laurel wreath on the brow of this modest aspirant after literary distinction.—*Manchester and Salford Advertiser*.

The work evinces great talent and a cultivated intellect, and is decidedly the production of a person of taste and genius. The volume has been ushered into the world unaided and unpatronized by wealth or influence; its merit must, however, insure it the support of the public, and entitle it to rank with the first Literature of the day; and we sincerely hope it will afford the author as ample remuneration as it will credit.—*Manks Advertiser*.

The general character of the poetry is calm and contemplative. The lover of Nature, and Nature's beauties, will be charmed by constant recurrence to his favourite theme, expressed in the happiest manner, and clothed in sweetest simplicity. Our author's lute is certainly "wreathed with violets," and his work abounds with expressions which recall a host of pleasing recollections.—*Odd Fellows' Quarterly Magazine*.

Their perusal will beguile the tedium of a winter's evening, and impart instruction whilst they afford amusement to the reader.—*York Herald*.

Evincing very considerable talent.—*Weekly Chronicle*.

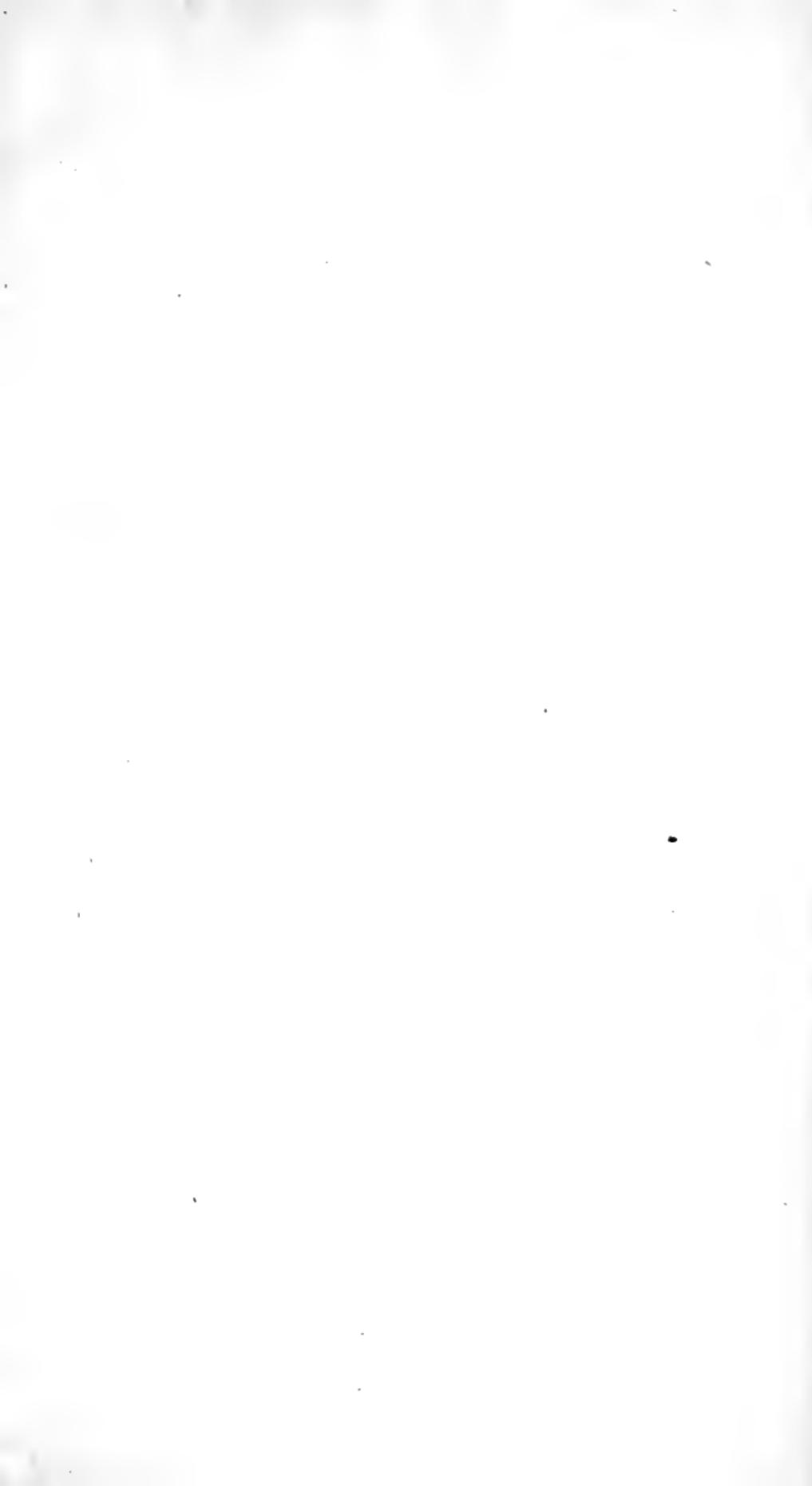
The prose tales and essays, though of unequal merit, are all characterised by gracefulness of style, and exuberance of humour and imagination. But the poetry is the most valuable portion of the volume. The pieces entitled—"To my First-Born"—"The World of Flowers"—"Lines to the Memory of Henry Liverseege"—"The Little Sprite"—"On the Loss of a Twin-Child"—"To _____, on her Marriage"—are of a very high order. The author has evidently drank deep of the Wordsworthian spirit.—*Bolton Free Press*.

It is a very pleasant volume, and may beguile the hours of the reader, as its various compositions have no doubt beguiled those of the writer.—*Era*.

The quaint and triple title of this volume, its emblematical frontispiece and exterior adornments, imagined in a spirit truly classical, and executed by the artist in the richest and most tasteful style, prepared us for a treat, which has been more than realised by the pleasure and the interest with which its contents

have inspired us. The work itself, an original miscellany of verse and prose, contrasted often both in matter and in manner with considerable and enlivening effect, is of an unpretending character, and of uncommon merit, embracing as it does a singular variety of sentiments and subjects, the whole of which are handled or expressed in a thoroughly natural and suitable versatility of style. Articles of humour, and passages of pathos ; stories of mirth, and suffering and passion ; fairy tales and lays of love ; fire-side scenes and records of happy home-born affections, are here all touched upon, and succeed each other in this charming volume with equal beauty and diversity. The sentimental and poetical portion of the book is especially distinguished by a pure and delicate simplicity of thought and word, which, if assiduously cultivated, will place the author high in one of the most pleasing, popular, and effective departments of poetical literature—that of ballad composition.—*Liverpool Chronicle*.

This book fully justifies its title by the character of its contents, which consist of rhyme, romance, and revery, all of the highest order. As a specimen of its *rhyme*, we have selected “The Sybil,” a sweet lyric, which adorns our poet’s corner ; and as *romances*, we would point to “The Self,” and “The Haunted Stream,” as happy illustrations. The *revery* is to be found in almost every page, both in the poetry and prose ; and the whole work is most neatly got up, forming a handsome Christmas present, or New Year’s gift, which parents need not fear of putting into the hands of their children, as in the whole four hundred pages of the book there is not to be found a word, thought, or sentiment, that would cause the least blush of shame to mantle on the cheek of virtue or innocence—on the contrary, a pure, healthful, and playful spirit pervades the entire work, which is made up of short pieces of alternate poetry and prose, and is in fact well calculated, from its miscellaneous and diversified matter, to beguile the hours of a winter’s evening, round the social hearth, and to afford instruction as well as amusement.—*York Courant*.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

Form L9-100m-9, '52 (A3105) 444

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 367 290 4

